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HISTORY

OF THE

WAR IN FRANCE AND BELGIUM,

IN 1815.

CONTAINING MINUTE DETAILS

OF THE

BATTLES OF QUATRE-BRAS, LIGNY, WAVRE,

AND

WATERLOO.

BY

CAPTAIN W. SIBORNE,

SECRETARY AND ADJUTANT OF THE ROYAL MILITARY ASYLUM;

CONSTRUCTOR OF THE "WATERLOO MODEL."

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VOL. I.

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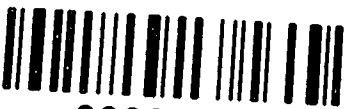
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TO THE

QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

MADAM,

IN graciously deigning to accept the dedication of these pages, Your Majesty has afforded the greatest possible encouragement to my humble endeavours to record, with simplicity, impartiality, and truth, the incidents of an eventful war, resulting in a long-enduring peace; a war which shed a new and brighter lustre on the valour and discipline of the British Army, and once more called forth the consummate sagacity and far-extending prescience of that illustrious Chief,

whom Your Majesty, with wise appreciation and a just pride, retains at its head.

Earnestly hoping that the result of those endeavours may prove not altogether undeserving of Your Majesty's approbation,

I have the honour to be,

With profound respect,

MADAM,

Your Majesty's most humble

And most devoted servant,

WILLIAM SIBORNE,

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PREFACE.

Some years ago, when constructing a Model of the Field of Waterloo, at a particular period of the battle, I found it necessary to make great exertions to procure that detailed information for which I had sought in vain in the already numerous *published* accounts of the military transactions of 1815. Anxious to ensure the rigorous accuracy of my work, I ventured to apply for information to nearly all the surviving eye-witnesses of the incidents which my model was intended to represent. In every quarter, and among officers of all ranks, from the general to the subaltern, my applications were responded to in a most liberal and generous spirit; and the result did indeed surprise me, so greatly at variance was this historical

evidence with the general notions which had previously prevailed on the subject. Thus was suggested the *present* work. I was induced by the success of this experiment to embrace a wider field, and to extend my inquiries over the entire battle, and, ultimately, throughout the campaign itself, from its commencement to its close.

Having become the depository of such valuable materials, I felt it a duty to the honourable profession of which I am an humble member, to submit to it, and to the world, a true and faithful account of this memorable epoch in the history of Britain's military greatness.

Though not so presumptuous as to imagine that I have fully supplied so absolute a desideratum, yet I consider myself fortunate in being the instrument of withdrawing so far the veil from Truth. One of my Waterloo correspondents has humorously remarked, that "if ever truth lies at the bottom of a well, she does so immediately after a great battle, and it takes an amazingly long time before she can be lugged out." The time of her emerging appears to have at length arrived, but, while I feel that I have brought to light much that was involved in obscurity, I cannot but be sensible that I may have fallen into errors. Should such be the case, I shall be most ready, hereafter, to make any corrections that may appear requisite, on my being favoured, *by eye-witnesses*, with further well authenticated information.

I take this opportunity of returning my sincere thanks to the numerous officers of the British Army, who have so kindly committed to my keeping their recollections of the events which I have attempted to describe. Similar thanks are likewise due to the officers of the King's German legion and Hanoverian subsidiary corps; as also to the General Officers who respectively furnished me with such information as related to the troops of Brunswick and Nassau.

I beg also to express my obligations to the Prussian Minister of War, and the officers of the Prussian general staff in Berlin, for the readiness and liberality with which they have supplied me with such details concerning the dispositions and movements of the troops of their sovereign, as were essential to me in prosecuting the task I had undertaken.

Having briefly explained the circumstances that led to the construction of the work which I thus venture to place before the Public, I have now only to express a hope that my labours may be crowned with usefulness. Should such a result occur, I shall then have attained the only fame I seek.

W. Siborne.

Royal Military Asylum, Chelsea,
March, 1844.

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* In examining these anaglyptographic engravings from models of the undulations of the ground represented, it is absolutely necessary that the reader should place the *upper* margin of the Plate *nearest the light*. If the upper side be placed *furthest from* the light, then everything will appear reversed—the heights will become hollows, and the hollows heights. In short, when in the former position, these plates represent the model or *relievo;* when in the latter, the mould or *intaglio*.

HISTORY

OF THE

WAR IN FRANCE AND BELGIUM

IN 1815.

CHAPTER I.

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March.

THE history of Europe records but few events so universally and so intimately involving the policy and interests of her component states, as the escape of Napoleon Buonaparte from the island of Elba, on the 26th of February, 1815—his landing in France, and his again ascending, unopposed, that throne, from which Louis XVIII. had fled with precipitation, upon learning the triumphal approach towards the capital, of his successful and formidable

March. rival. With the rapidity of lightning the intelligence spread itself over the whole Continent, and with all the suddenness and violence of an electric shock, did it burst amidst the delegates from the different states, who were then assembled in Congress at Vienna. This important assembly, so unexpectedly interrupted, had been called together to deliberate upon measures of international security and prosperity; and to solve those intricate questions of policy necessarily arising out of the various combinations, which, in the course of a general war, carried on with unmitigated violence, and but little intermission, for nearly a quarter of a century, had so fatally unhinged and dismembered the previously existing social order and polity of Europe. With one accord, a fresh appeal to the sword was decided upon; the military resources of every nation were again called into requisition. From state to state the cry "To arms!" was responded to with cheerfulness and alacrity, and immense armies were put in motion towards the French frontier, all animated with the sole object and fixed determination of annihilating, for ever, the common foe whom they had already conquered, but whom, as it would then appear, they had but ineffectually humbled. The openly declared project of the Allied Sovereigns to employ all their means, and combine all their efforts, towards the accomplishment of the complete overthrow of the resuscitated power of Napoleon, with whom they

had determined, thenceforth, to enter into neither truce nor treaty,* was singularly favoured by the circumstance of their armies being still retained upon a war establishment. The forces of the several Powers were continued on that scale, in consequence of the difficulties experienced in the Congress in dealing with and settling many perplexing questions of international policy, and moderating the warmth of the discussions that took place upon them. It was considered expedient to keep up powerful reserves, available both for home service, and for any contingencies that might arise out of combinations and revolts among those minor states, whose aversion to the new political arrangements was more than suspected. Thus it had been found necessary to detach bodies of troops from the main bulk of the forces, in consequence of the state of the Poles placed under the protection of Russia, and of the Saxons inhabiting that portion of their country which had been ceded to Prussia; as also, in consequence of the powerful diversion, as regarded Austria, caused by the sudden irruption of Murat, king of Naples, into the north of Italy. Notwithstanding these necessary deductions, however, it was found practicable to assemble, by the end of May, an efficient force of not less than 500,000 men, upon different points contiguous to the French frontier, with all the supplies

March.

* See the Declaration, on the 13th of March, of the Allied Powers, on the return of Napoleon Buonaparte to France—Appendix I.

March. necessary for the prosecution of a vigorous campaign.*

The most important portion of this extensive line of frontier was undoubtedly that which fronted the Netherlands; for although it had been planned by the Allies that no advance was to be made by the troops in Belgium, until the remainder of their forces had reached a line of connecting points along the French frontier, when all their armies were to march, in combined movement, upon the capital, still it was reasonably to be expected, that Napoleon would not wait for the completion of this plan, but rather that he would endeavour, by a decisive effort, if not to frustrate its accomplishment, at least to diminish its efficacy. It required no great exercise of military sagacity or political foresight to predict, that after having adopted a maturely considered disposition of force, on the most important points along his general line of defence, and placed his frontier fortresses upon a respectable footing, Napoleon would open the tremendous game, upon which his crown, his political existence, and the fate of France were now fairly staked, by a bold, sudden, and resolute advance into Belgium—straining every nerve to vanquish, in detail, the allied forces in that densely populated country, of which a vast portion was already prepared to declare in his favour. His

* See the Treaty of Alliance, of the 25th of March, 1815, concluded between Austria, Russia, Prussia, and Great Britain—Appendix II.

March to June.

authority once established in Brussels, through the means of some great and signal triumph, the accession to his moral influence over the entire mass of the French nation would be immense; and then, flying to the succour of his nearest corps menaced, from the banks of the Rhine, by the approach of hostile forces, (upon which his possession of Belgium would operate as a powerful check by the facilities thus afforded for a combined attack in front and flank,) a series of brilliant successes, supported by fresh levies from the interior, might enable him even to dictate terms to the Allies, who had indignantly rejected all his overtures.

Hence the importance of narrowly watching the Belgian frontier, and of making due preparations for meeting any attack in that quarter, was too obvious not to form a principal feature in the general plan of the Allies. Its defence was assigned to an army under the Duke of Wellington, comprising contingent forces from Great Britain, from Hanover, the Netherlands, Brunswick, and Nassau; and to a Prussian army, under Field Marshal Prince Blücher von Wahlstadt.

At the moment of the landing of Napoleon on the French shore, the only force in the Netherlands consisted, in addition to the native troops, of a weak Anglo-Hanoverian corps, under the command of His Royal Highness the Prince of Orange; but the zeal, energy, and activity dis-

March to June.

played by the government of Great Britain, in engrafting upon this nucleus a powerful army, amounting, at the commencement of hostilities, to about 100,000 combatants, notwithstanding the impediments and delays occasioned by the absence of a considerable portion of its troops in America, were truly surprising. At the same time, the extraordinary supply of subsidies furnished by the British Parliament, without which not one of the armies of the Allied Sovereigns could have commenced operations, and by means of which England thus became the great lever whereby the whole of Europe was set in motion towards the attainment of the one common object, was admirably illustrative of the bold, decided, and straightforward policy of the most determined, the most indefatigable, and the most consistent enemy of Napoleon.

Within the same period, the Prussian forces, originally limited to a corps of 30,000 men, under General Count Kleist von Nollendorf, occupying the Prussian territories bounded by the Rhine, the Meuse, and the Moselle, were augmented to an effective army of 116,000 combatants, with all the rapidity and energy which a keen sense of the wrongs and miseries their country had endured, under the ruthless sway of their inveterate foe, and a salutary dread of a repetition of such infliction, could not fail to inspire.*

* See the Proclamation of the King of Prussia to his army—Appendix III.

March to June.

Great Britain and Prussia thus occupied the post of honour, and formed the vanguard of the mighty masses which Europe was pouring forth to seal the doom of the Napoleon dynasty.

A Russian army, under Field Marshal Count Barclay de Tolly, amounting to 167,000 men, was rapidly traversing the whole of Germany, in three main columns, of which the right, commanded by General Dochterow, advanced by Kalisch, Torgau, Leipzig, Erfurt, Hanau, Frankfort, and Hochheim, towards Mayence; the centre, commanded by General Baron Sacken, advanced by Breslau, Dresden, Zwickau, Baireuth, Nuremberg, Aschaffenburg, Dieburg, and Gross-Gerau, towards Oppenheim; while the left column, commanded by General Count Langeron, took its direction along the line of Prague, Aube, Adelsheim, Neckar, and Heidelberg, towards Manheim. The heads of the columns reached the Middle Rhine, when hostilities were on the point of breaking out upon the Belgian frontier. The intimation to these troops, of another campaign in France, and of a probable re-occupation of Paris, had imparted new life and vigour to the spirit of inveterate hatred and insatiable revenge, which they had so thoroughly imbibed against the French, and which had so invariably marked their career since the memorable burning of Moscow.*

* See Address of the Emperor Alexander, to a numerous body of Russian troops which he reviewed on the 5th of April, 1815—Appendix IV.

March to June.

An Austrian army of about 50,000 men, commanded by Field Marshal Prince Schwartzenburg, and the army of reserve, under the Archduke Ferdinand, amounting to 40,000 men, were gradually occupying the most important points along the right bank of the Rhine, between Basle and Manheim. In addition to this force, about 120,000 men were then assembling on the plains of Lombardy, upon the termination of the decisive campaign against Murat, which secured the deposition of the latter, and the restoration of King Ferdinand to the throne of Naples. Vigorous and energetic measures such as these on the part of Austria, clearly indicated that her government, discarding alike the circumstance of a family alliance with Napoleon, and the views which had once induced it to enter into a league with him, and with the southern German states, as a security against its formidable northern neighbours, still adhered with inflexible resolution to its subsequently adopted policy of entering into, and fostering, a general European compact, having for its object the complete annihilation of the despotic sway of the ambitious soldier-sovereign of the French.

The assembling also, on the Upper Rhine, of a Bavarian army, commanded by Prince Wrede, of the contingents of Baden and Wurtemberg, under the hereditary Prince of Wurtemberg, and of the troops of Hesse, amounting altogether to about 80,000 men, offered a sufficient guarantee for the

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line of policy espoused by the confederated states of the Rhine. March to June.

Formidable as was the attitude assumed by the Allies towards France, and imposing as was their array of armies assembling upon her frontier, they nevertheless found their great antagonist prepared, on learning that they had determined on an irrevocable appeal to the sword, to throw away the scabbard. He assumed a bold and resolute posture of defence—armed at all points, and prepared at all hazards, either to ward off the blows of his adversaries, or to become himself the assailant. The indefatigable exertions of Napoleon in restoring the empire to its former strength and grandeur, were really astonishing; and never, perhaps, in the whole course of the extraordinary career of that extraordinary man, did the powerful energies of his comprehensive mind shine forth with greater brilliancy and effect, than in his truly wonderful and incredibly rapid development of the national resources of France, on this momentous occasion. The truth of this assertion will be best confirmed by briefly enumerating some of the most important objects accomplished within the limited interval of three months—from his landing at Cannes, to his taking the field against the Allies. Among them were—the complete overthrow of all obstacles in the way of his re-ascending the throne; the reconciliation, to a very considerable extent, of the several factions whose discordant views and inte-

March to June.

rests had distracted the whole nation; the suppression of the insurrectionary movements in La Vendée, and the establishment of his authority over every part of the empire; the projection of various public measures, laws, and ordinances; the remodelling of the civil and military administrations; the restoration of the army to its previous organization under the imperial regime; the placing of the numerous fortresses of the kingdom in an efficient state; the erection of fortified works around Paris, Lyons, and other important points; the reorganization of the national guard *d'élite*, to the extent of 112,000 men, divided into 200 battalions, and destined principally for garrisoning the fortresses; the adoption of the most active operations in all the arsenals, and the employment of vast numbers of additional workmen in the manufacture of arms and ammunition. Before all these we ought to place the raising, clothing, arming, drilling, and organizing of 410,000 men, (including the national guard d'élite,) which, in addition to the 149,000 men of which the royal army consisted on the 1st of March, formed, on the 1st of June, an effective force of 559,000 men, available for the national defence.

Of this number, the effective force of the troops of the line amounted to 217,000 men, and the regimental depôts to 146,000 men: the remainder, consisting of 200 battalions of the national guard

d'élite, of 20 regiments of marines, of 10 battalions of marine artillery, of coast guards, veterans, and organized pensioners, and amounting to 196,000 men, constituted the "*armée extraordinaire*," to be employed in the defence of the fortresses and of the coast. March to June.

Napoleon having calculated that an effective force of 800,000 men would be requisite to enable him to oppose the Allies with full confidence of success, had given orders for the formation, at the regimental depôts, of the 3d, 4th, and 5th battalions of every regiment of infantry, and of the 4th and 5th squadrons of every regiment of cavalry; also for the additional formation of 30 battalions of artillery-train, of 20 regiments of the young guard, of 10 battalions of waggon-train, and of 20 regiments of marines. These and other measures he anticipated, would furnish the force desired, but not until the 1st of October. The movements of the Allies, however, and his projected plan of active operations, precluded the possibility of his waiting for their full accomplishment. To augment the means of local defence, instructions were also issued for the reorganization of the national guard throughout the empire, by which it was divided into 3130 battalions, and was to form, *when complete*, no less a force than 2,250,000 men!

Out of the disposable force of the troops of the line, and partly also out of the national

March to June.

guard d'élite, were formed 7 *corps d'armée*, 4 corps of reserve cavalry, 4 corps of observation, and an army of the West, or of La Vendée.

The army of the North, generally designated the grand army, was to be considered as acting under the immediate orders of the Emperor. It consisted of 5 corps d'armée, (the 1st, 2d, 3d, 4th, and 6th,) all the reserve-cavalry, and the imperial guard. Its total force amounted to about 120,000 men; and its distribution in the early part of June was as follows:—

The 1st corps d'armée, commanded by Count D'Erlon, had its head-quarters at Lille; the 2d, under the orders of Count Reille, was cantoned in the environs of Valenciennes; the 3d, under Count Vandamme, was assembled in the environs of Mezieres; the 4th, under Count Gérard, in the environs of Metz; and the 6th corps, commanded by Count Lobau, was stationed at Laon. The four corps of reserve-cavalry, under the chief command of Marshal Grouchy, were in cantonments between the Aisne and the Sambre. The imperial guard was in Paris.

The 5th corps d'armée, commanded by Count Rapp, formed the basis of an army of the Rhine, and consisted of about 36,000 men. Its head-quarters were at Strasburg, and it occupied the principal points along that part of the frontier between Landau and Hagenau; communicating with the 4th corps d'armée on its

left, as also with the 1st corps of observation on its right. March to June.

The 7th corps d'armée, commanded by the Duke of Albufera, formed the basis of the army of the Alps. It did not at that time amount to more than 15,000 men, but arrangements were made for its augmentation, by the end of June, to 40,000 men. It held the passes along the Italian frontier—was strongly posted at Grenoble, and at Chambery—communicating on its left with the 1st corps of observation, and covering the approach to Lyons, where very extensive works were carried on with the utmost vigour and activity.

The 1st corps of observation, called the army of the Jura, commanded by Lieutenant General Lecourbe, guarded the passes along the Swiss frontier; had its head-quarters at Altkirch, and occupied the line between Huningen and Béfort—communicating on its right with the army of the Alps, and on its left with the army of the Rhine. It did not, at that time, consist of a larger force than 4500 men, which, however, was to be augmented to 18,000, on the arrival of additional battalions from the national guard d'élite, then in course of active organization.

The 2d corps of observation, called the army of the Var, commanded by Marshal Brune, had its head-quarters at Marseilles; occupied Toulon and Antibes, and watched the frontier of the Maritime Alps. Its force, which then amounted to 5300

March to June.

men, was to be joined by sixteen battalions of the national guard d'élite, and, in this way, increased to 17,000 men.

The 3d corps of observation, called the army of the Eastern Pyrenees, commanded by Lieutenant General Count Decaen, had its head-quarters at Perpignan. It did not then consist of more than 3000 men, but was to be augmented by thirty-two battalions of the national guard d'élite, to 23,000 men.

The 4th corps of observation, called the army of the Western Pyrenees, or of the Gironde, was commanded by Lieutenant General Clauzel; had its head-quarters in Bourdeaux; consisted of the same force as that of the 3d corps; and was to be augmented in a similar manner.

The army of La Vendée, commanded by General Lamarque, was occupied in restoring tranquillity to that part of the empire. It consisted of about 17,000 men, including detachments supplied temporarily from the 3d and 4th corps of observation.

Arrangements had also been made for reinforcing, at the end of June, the two armies of the Rhine and of the Alps, with 50,000 men from the troops of the line organized in the regimental depôts, and with 100,000 men from the national guard d'élite; and with a view to afford a second line and support to the grand army, commanded by Napoleon in person, the latter was to be augmented by 100,000 men of the national guard, and by

60,000 men of regular troops taken from the depôts, where the additional battalions and squadrons of regiments were in course of daily organization. March to June.

The general aspect of France at that moment was singularly warlike. It was that of a whole nation buckling on its armour: over the entire country armed bodies were to be seen in motion towards their several points of destination: every where the new levies for the line, and the newly enrolled national guards were in an unremitting course of drill and organization: the greatest activity was maintained, day and night, in all the arsenals, and in all the manufactories of clothing and articles of equipment: crowds of workmen were constantly employed in the repair of the numerous fortresses, and in the erection of entrenched works. Every where appeared a continued transport of artillery, waggons, arms, ammunition, and all the material of war; whilst upon every road forming an approach to any of the main points of assembly in the vicinity of the frontiers, might be seen those well-formed veteran bands, Napoleon's followers through many a bloody field, moving forth with all the order, and with all the elasticity of spirit, inspired by the full confidence of a renewed career of victory—rejoicing in the display of those standards which so proudly recalled the most glorious fields that France had ever won, and testifying by their acclamations their enthusiastic devotion to the cause of their

March to June.

Emperor, which was ever cherished by them as identified with that of their country.

The sentiments which so generally animated the troops of the line, must not, however, be understood as having been equally imbibed by the remaining portion of the army, or indeed by the major part of the nation. There was one predominant cause, which, though its influence acted as an additional stimulus to the army, was, to a very considerable extent, the sole incentive to exertion with the civil portion of the community. It was the general prevalence of that unconquerable aversion and undisguised contempt entertained by the French for the mass of their foreign invaders, whose former humiliation and subjection, the result of an almost uninterrupted course of victory and triumph, to which the history of France presented no parallel, had served to flatter and to gratify the national vanity. It was this feeling, combined with a dread of that retributive justice which would inevitably follow in the train of a successful invasion, that operated so powerfully upon the mass of the nation, with whom the cry of "Vive l'Empereur!" merged into that of "Vive la France!" To the above cause may also be traced the temporary reconciliation of the different factions which it was one of the main objects of Napoleon's celebrated "*Champ de Mai*,"* to establish. This

* See Appendix V.

convocation of the popular representatives, which had in a measure been forced upon the Emperor by the political vantage-ground the people had gained during even the short constitutional reign of Louis XVIII., and of which they had begun to feel the benefit, did not in any degree fulfil the expectations of its projector. The stern republicans were dissatisfied with the retention of a chamber of peers, which, in the late reign, they had regarded as an English importation; and the royalists were no less disgusted with the materials out of which such a chamber had been constructed; while both parties felt it to be a mere semblance of a constitutional body, destined to be composed of the willing slaves of the despot, his ready instruments for counteracting and paralyzing the effects of any violent ebullition of the popular will. When it is considered that an overwhelming majority of the members of the new chamber of deputies were men of avowed republican principles, and that in their very first sittings, they evinced by the tone of their debates, and by the tenor of their measures, a determination to uphold the authority vested in them by the people, and to make even the military power of the Emperor subservient to their views of popular government; when, also, it is considered that the two predominant parties in the state, the republicans and the royalists, relied upon, and awaited but, the issue of events, for the ultimate success and realization of their respective

March to June.

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principles, it need not excite surprise that Napoleon, on quitting the capital to take the field, should have appeared to feel that he left behind him a power even more dangerous to the stability of his authority, and more destructive of his ambitious projects, than that which he was going personally to confront. He naturally calculated largely upon the enthusiasm of his troops and their devotion to his cause; but he must have entertained serious doubts as to whether this spirit was shared by the great majority of the nation; and must have foreseen that it would only be by means of a successful result of the approaching contest, that he could possibly avert the dangers to which his sovereignty was exposed, as much by the machinations of political opponents at home, as by the combinations of hostile forces abroad. He was now made painfully sensible of the vast change which the result of all his former wars, the restoration of the legitimate monarch, and the newly chartered liberty of the subject, had gradually wrought in the political feelings and sentiments of the nation. In short, he found that he had to contend with a new, a mighty, and an uncontrollable power—the great moral power of public opinion—compared with which, the military power, centred in a single individual, however brilliant the latter in genius and in conception, however fertile in expedients, and however daring and successful in enterprise and in execution, can acquire no permanent sta-

March to June.

bility, when not based upon, and emanating from, the broad and comprehensive moral energies of the nation; and even a succession of dazzling triumphs, when gained through the instrumentality of an arbitrary drain upon the national resources, and in opposition to the real interests and welfare of the state, tends but to hasten the downfall of the military dictator, whose career may be aptly likened to a Grecian column erected upon a loose foundation, displaying around its lofty capital an exuberance of meretricious ornament, which, by its disproportioned weight, destroys the equilibrium of the ill-supported shaft, and involves the entire structure in one confused and irretrievable ruin. Its fall may startle the world with its shock; the fragments may strew the earth in a wreck as gigantic as were its proportions when it drew the gaze of admiring or trembling nations; but they are but the more striking proofs of the destruction that has overtaken it;—it is a ruin still.

CHAPTER II.

Belgium again destined to become the theatre of war—The British army—The Duke of Wellington—The Prussian army—Prince Blücher von Wahlstadt—the King's German Legion; the Hanoverian, Brunswick, Dutch, Belgian, and Nassau troops—Napoleon and the French army—Prospect of a severe struggle.

April to June.

BELGIUM, the frequent battle-ground of Europe, whose every stream and every town is associated with the memory of by-gone deeds of arms, was destined, in 1815, to witness another and a mighty struggle—a struggle in which were arrayed, on the one side, the two foremost of the confederated armies advancing towards the French frontiers, and, on the other, the renowned "*grande armée*" of imperial France, resuscitated at the magic call of its original founder—the great Napoleon himself. During the months of April and May, troops of all arms continued to enter upon, and spread themselves over, the Belgian soil.

Here might be seen the British soldier, flushed with recent triumphs in the Peninsula over the same foe with whom he was now prepared once more to renew the combat; and here the Prussian, eager for the deadly strife, and impatiently rushing onward to encounter that enemy whose ravages and excesses in his fatherland still rankled in his

memory. The Englishman was not fired by the desire of retribution, for it had pleased Divine Providence to spare Great Britain from the scourge of domestic war, and to preserve her soil unstained by the foot-print of a foreign enemy. The Prussian soldier looked forward with a sullen pleasure to the prospect of revenge: vengeance seemed to him a sacred duty, imposed upon him by all the ties of kindred, and by all those patriotic feelings, which, in the hour of Prussia's need, had roused her entire people from the abject state to which they had been so fatally subdued; which, when the whole country lay prostrate at the conqueror's feet, so wonderfully, so powerfully, and so successfully prompted her sons to throw off the yoke. History will mark this deliverance as the brilliant point in Prussia's brightest era, affording as it does, a clear and beautiful parallel to that in which an equally forcible appeal to the energies of the nation was made with similar success by that illustrious statesman and general, Frederick the Great, when opposed single-handed to the immense armies and powerful resources of surrounding states. France was about to expiate by her own sufferings the wrongs she had wrought upon his country and his kind, and the Prussian panted for the opportunity of satiating his revenge. April to June.

The Briton, if he had no such spur as that which urged the Prussian soldier forward, did not want a sufficiently exciting stimulus; he cherished,

April to June.

in an eminent degree, that high feeling and proud bearing which a due sense of the obligations imposed on him by his country, and of her anxious expectations of his prowess, could not fail to inspire; determined resolutely and cheerfully to discharge the former, and, if possible, to more than realize the latter.

These feelings and dispositions of the soldiery in the two most advanced of the allied armies were concentrated with remarkable intensity in the characters of their respective chiefs. With peculiar propriety may it be said of the illustrious Wellington, that he personified, as he ever has done, the pure ideal of the British soldier—the true character of his own followers. Resolute, yet cool, cautious, and calculating in his proceedings; possessing a natural courage unshaken even under the most appalling dangers and difficulties; placing great yet not vain reliance upon physical and moral strength, as opposed to the force of numbers;—it was not surprising that he should have inspired with unbounded confidence, soldiers who could not but see in his character and conduct the reflection and stamp of their own qualities, the worth of which he so well knew, and which he had so often proved during the arduous struggle that had been brought to so brilliant and so glorious a conclusion. But besides these traits in his character, which so completely identified him with a British army, there were others which peculiarly

distinguished him as one of the greatest captains that his own or any other nation ever produced, and which might well inspire confidence as to the result of the approaching contest, even opposed as he was to the hero of a hundred fights, with whom he was now, for the first time to measure swords. The eagle-glance with which he detected the object of every hostile movement, and the promptitude with which he decided upon, and carried into effect, the measures necessary to counteract the enemy's efforts; the lightning-like rapidity with which he conducted his attacks, founded as they frequently were upon the instantaneously discovered errors of his opponents; the noble and unexampled presence of mind with which he surveyed the battle-field, and with which he gave his orders and instructions; unaffected by merely temporary success, unembarrassed by sudden difficulties, and undismayed by unexpected danger; the many proofs which his operations in the Peninsula had afforded of his accurate knowledge, just conception, and skilful discrimination, of the true principles of the science of strategy—all tended to point him out as the individual best fitted by his abilities, his experience, and his character, to head the military array assembled to decide the all-important question whether the star of Napoleon was to regain the ascendant, or to set in darkness; whether his iron despotism was again to erect its mighty head, or to be

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now struck down and crushed—finally and effectually crushed.

The character of the commander of the Prussian army in this memorable campaign, the veteran Marshal, Prince Blücher von Wahlstadt, was, in like manner, peculiarly adapted for concentrating within itself all those feelings and emotions already adverted to as animating this portion of the enemies of France—possessing to a degree bordering on rashness, a high spirited daring in enterprise; distinguished, on critical occasions in the field, when the unrestrained feelings and nature of the *ci-devant* bold hussar started forth in aid of the veteran commander, by a personal display of chivalrous and impetuous bravery; ever vigilant for an opportunity of harassing his enemy; and fixedly relentless in the pursuit, so long as he retained the mastery;—qualities, which, in his own country, had acquired for him the soubriquet of "*Marschall Vorwärts*"—he was eminently fitted to be both the representative and the leader of the Prussians.*

* The fiery impetuosity of his character was finely tempered by the sage counsels of his chief of the staff, the veteran Lieutenant General Count von Gneisenau, in whose talents, foresight, and judgment, he invariably placed implicit confidence. Blücher always took great pleasure in publicly expressing his obligations to his old and faithful companion in arms; a circumstance, which, while it redounded so highly to the merits of his friend, at the same time brought forth, in prominent relief, the perfect openness of his own character, and the extreme modesty of his nature. Numerous instances might be cited of the manifestation of this generous and kindly feeling: the two following are humorous, and at the same time

April to June.

Here, too, in close alliance and amity with the British soldier, were seen the German-legionary, the Hanoverian, and the Brunswicker, who had so nobly shared with him, under the same chief, all the toils and all the glories of the war in the Peninsula; and who were now prepared to defend the threatened liberties of their respective countries, the very existence of which, as independent states, hung upon the issue of the impending struggle. Although the British were but little acquainted with their other allies, the Dutch, the Belgians, and the Nassau troops in the service of the king of the Netherlands, still the fact that it was upon their own soil the brunt of the coming contest was to fall, and in all probability to decide the question whether it should become a portion of imperial France, or continue an independent state,

highly characteristic. When at Oxford, in 1814, along with the Emperor of Russia, the King of Prussia, the Prince Regent, the Duke of Wellington, and Prince Metternich, he received an intimation that the heads of the university intended to confer upon him, as well as upon those illustrious personages, the dignity of a Doctor. Blücher, who had never once dreamed of the possibility of his becoming one of the learned, could not refrain from laughter, and jocularly remarked, "Well, if I am to be a doctor, they cannot do less than make Gneisenau an apothecary; for we both work together—and it is he who has to make up the pills which I am in the habit of administering." In 1818, he happened to be in the midst of a very large party in Berlin, where, in the course of the evening, much merriment and jesting arose from the proposal and solution of enigmas. Blücher at once absorbed the attention of the guests, by remarking, "Come, I will do what none of you can—I will kiss my own head!" and while all were expressing their surprise, and wondering how this was to be accomplished, the old man added, with an air of the utmost singleness and assurance, "This is the way," when, rising, he advanced towards Gneisenau, whom he kissed and embraced most heartily.

April to June.

coupled with the knowledge which the British troops possessed of the character of the prince at their head, who had gained his laurels under their own eyes, and who had thus ingratiated himself in their favour, encouraged great hopes of their hearty exertions in the common cause.

It was naturally to be expected that Napoleon, from the moment he re-ascended the throne of his former glory, would devote the utmost energies of his all-directing mind to the full development of whatever military means France, notwithstanding her recent reverses, yet retained; but the rapidity and the order with which so regular and so well organized a force as that which was now concentrating on the French side of the Sambre, had been collected and put in motion, were truly wonderful. The speedy and almost sudden re-appearance of the old army in all its grandeur, with its corps and divisions headed by men, who, by a series of daring and successful exploits, had proved their just titles to command, and endeared themselves to the old campaigners, was such that it seemed as if the French had realized the fable of the dragon's teeth, which it might be said they had sown as they crossed their frontiers in the previous year, when retreating upon the capital before the victorious Allies. Never did any army contain within itself so much of that necessary essence in the composition of a military force,—unbounded enthusiasm, combined with the purest devotion to

its leader. The oft-told tale of the veteran of so many a hard-fought field, indulging in the hope of aiding by his exertions, at any sacrifice, in again carrying the eagles to the scenes of their former triumphs, excited the ardour of many a youthful aspirant to share with him the glory of wiping out the stain which had dimmed the lustre of his country's fame, and darkened a most eventful page in her annals. April to June.

Such being the nature of the elements ready to rush into collision, it was easy to foresee that the shock which that collision would produce, would be both violent and terrible; but no one could have anticipated that within the short space of four days from the commencement of hostilities, the die would be irrevocably cast, annihilating for ever the imperial sway of Napoleon, and securing to Europe one of the longest periods of peace recorded in her history.

CHAPTER III.

Strength, composition, and distribution of the Anglo-allied army under Wellington—Its projected concentration in the event of Napoleon's advance—Strength, composition, and distribution of the Prussian army under Blücher—Its projected concentration in the event of Napoleon's advance—The line on which Wellington's left and Blücher's right rested, selected by Napoleon for the direction of his attack—Strength, composition, and distribution of the French army under Napoleon—Necessity under which the French Emperor is placed of opening the campaign without awaiting the further development of his resources—Slight retrospect of the campaign of 1814—Napoleon's prospect of success—His preparations for the commencement of hostilities—Wellington receives information from his outposts in front of Tournai, of the assembling of French troops on the frontier, but delays the concentration of the Anglo-allied troops until certain of the object and direction of Napoleon's main operation—Concentration of the French army—Napoleon joins the latter in person—"Ordre du jour" of the 14th of June.

June. By the middle of June the Anglo-allied army which had been gradually assembling in Belgium, under the command of the Duke of Wellington, amounted to about 106,000 men, and was composed in the following manner :—

INFANTRY.

British	23,543
King's German Legion	3,301
Hanoverian	22,788
Brunswick	5,376
Nassau (1st regiment)	2,880
Dutch and Belgian	24,174
	82,062

June.

CAVALRY.			
British			5,913
King's German Legion			2,560
Hanoverian			1,682
Brunswick			922
Dutch and Belgian			3,405
			14,482
ARTILLERY.			
British	5,030	102 guns	
King's German Legion	526	18 „	
Hanoverian	465	12 „	
Brunswick	510	16 „	
Dutch and Belgian	1,635	48 „	
	8,166	196 guns.	
ENGINEERS, SAPPERS AND MINERS, WAGGON-TRAIN, AND STAFF CORPS.			
British			1,240

TOTAL.	
Infantry	82,062
Cavalry	14,482
Artillery	8,166
Engineers, Waggon-train, &c.	1,240
	*105,950 men and 196 guns.

The infantry was divided into two corps and a reserve.

The 1st corps, commanded by General his Royal Highness the Prince of Orange,† was com-

*For detailed Returns see Appendix VI. They are founded on the following data: those of the British infantry and cavalry, as also of the British engineers, sappers and miners, waggon-train, and staff corps, are taken from the twelfth volume of the Despatches of the Duke of Wellington, compiled by Colonel Gurwood, C.B., p. 486; those of the British artillery from documents furnished by the Ordnance Department; those of the King's German Legion and Hanoverian troops from returns compiled by Major Benne, K.H., under the direction of the Hanoverian military authorities; those of the Brunswick troops from information furnished by Lieut. General von Herzberg of that service; those of the Nassau troops from returns supplied by General von Kruse, who commanded them; and those of the Dutch-Belgian troops from returns obtained from the Dutch government.

†His Majesty the present King of Holland; General in the British service; G.C.B.

June. posed of the 1st division, under Major General Cooke;* of the 3rd division, under Lieutenant General Sir Charles Alten;† of the 2nd Dutch-Belgian Division, under Lieutenant General de Perponcher; and of the 3rd Dutch-Belgian division, under Lieutenant General Baron Chassé.

The left of this corps rested upon Genappe, Quatre-Bras, and Frasne, on the high road leading from Brussels to Charleroi on the Sambre, and communicated with the right of the 1st corps d'armée of the Prussian army, the head-quarters of which corps were at Charleroi. De Perponcher's Dutch-Belgian division formed the extreme left, having its head-quarters at Nivelles, on the high road from Brussels to Binche. On its right was Chassé's Dutch-Belgian division, more in advance, in the direction of Mons and Binche, and quartered principally in Roeulx, and in the villages between the latter place and Binche. The next division on the right was Alten's, having its head-quarters at Soignies, on the high road from Brussels to Mons, and occupying villages between this town, Roeulx, Braine-le-comte, and Enghien. The right division, Cooke's, had its head-quarters at Enghien.

The 2d corps, commanded by Lieutenant General Lord Hill,‡ consisted of the 2d division, under

* Lieutenant General Sir George Cooke, K.C.B. died in February, 1837.

† Count Alten, Major General in the British service, G.C.B., G.C.H. died in April, 1840.

‡ General Lord Viscount Hill; G.C.B; G.C.H.; K.C., died on the 10th of December, 1842.

Lieutenant General Sir Henry Clinton;* of the 4th division, under Lieutenant General the Hon. Sir Charles Colville;† of the 1st Dutch-Belgian division, under Lieutenant General Stedmann; and of a brigade raised for service in the Dutch colonies, called the Indian brigade, under Lieutenant General Baron Anthing. June.

The 2d division, which formed the left of this corps, communicated with Alten's right; its head-quarters were at Ath, on the Dender, and upon the high road leading from Brussels to Tournai, and one brigade, (the 3d,) occupied Lens, situated about midway between Ath and Mons.

The 4th division was the next on the right, having its head-quarters at Audenarde on the Scheldt, and occupying also Renaix. One brigade of this division, (the 6th Hanoverian,) garrisoned the fortress of Nieuport on the coast. The 1st Dutch-Belgian division was cantoned in villages bordering upon the high road connecting Grammont with Ghent; and the so-called Indian brigade occupied villages between this line and Alost.

The reserve consisted of the 5th division, under Lieutenant General Sir Thomas Picton;‡ of the 6th division, under Lieutenant General the Hon.

* Lieutenant General Sir Henry Clinton, G.C.B.; G.C.H., died on the 11th of December, 1830.

† Now General the Honourable Sir Charles Colville, G.C.B.; G.C.H.

‡ Lieutenant General Sir Thomas Picton, K.C.B., was killed at the battle of Waterloo.

June. Sir Lowry Cole ;* of the Brunswick division under the Duke of Brunswick ;† of the Hanoverian corps under Lieutenant General von der Decken ;‡ and of the contingent of the Duke of Nassau, which comprised the 1st regiment of Nassau infantry, containing three battalions, and forming a brigade under the command of General von Kruse.§

The 5th and 6th divisions, and the Brunswick division, were quartered principally in and around Brussels, excepting the 7th brigade, which, together with Von der Decken's corps, the 13th veteran battalion, the 1st foreign battalion, and the 2d garrison battalion, garrisoned Antwerp, Ostend, Nieuport, Ypres, Tournai, and Mons; and von Kruse's Nassau brigade was cantoned between Brussels and Louvain.

Of the fortresses already mentioned, those which had not been destroyed by the French when they gained possession of the country in 1794, namely, Antwerp, Ostend, and Nieuport, were strengthened, and each rendered capable of holding out a

* General the Honourable Sir Galbraith Lowry Cole, G.C.B., died on the 5th of October, 1842.

† His Serene Highness, Frederick William, Duke of Brunswick Œels; Lieutenant General in the British army; was killed at the battle of Quatre-Bras.

‡ Lieutenant General Count von der Decken, G.C.H., died on the 22d of May, 1840.

§ The 2d regiment of Nassau infantry had been, since 1814, in the immediate service and pay of the King of the Netherlands; it now constituted, with the regiment of Orange-Nassau, the 2d brigade of de Perponcher's Dutch-Belgian division, and was commanded by Colonel Prince Bernhard, of Saxe-Weimar.

a siege. By taking every possible advantage offered by the remains of the old fortifications, and by the continued employment of 20,000 labourers by requisitions on the country, in addition to the military working parties, and by the accession of artillery and stores from England and Holland, the towns of Ypres, Tournai, Mons, Ath, and the citadel of Ghent were placed in a state of defence, and a redoubt was constructed at Audenarde to protect the sluice-gates, which afforded the means of inundating that part of the country.* June.

The cavalry of the Anglo-allied army, commanded by Lieutenant General the Earl of Uxbridge,† consisted of seven brigades, comprising the British and the King's German Legion; of a Hanoverian brigade; of five squadrons of Brunswick cavalry; and of three brigades of Dutch-Belgian cavalry.

The British and King's German Legion cavalry, with the Hanoverian brigade, were stationed at Grammont and Ninove, and in villages bordering upon the Dender. The Brunswick cavalry was dispersed in the vicinity of Brussels. The 1st brigade of Dutch-Belgian cavalry was cantoned in the neighbourhood of Roeulx; the 2nd brigade, in villages between Roeulx and Mons; and the 3rd

* Orders for the defence of the towns of Antwerp, Ostend, Nieuport, Ypres, Tournai, Ath, Mons, and Ghent, will be found in the Appendix VII.

† The present Marquess of Anglesey; General; K. G.; G. C. B.; G. C. H.

June. brigade, partly on the south side of Mons, in the direction of Maubeuge and Beaumont, and partly between Binche and Mons.

The wide dissemination of the Duke of Wellington's forces which the advanced line of cantonments presented—a line forming a considerable portion of a circle, of which Brussels was the centre, and the Tournai, Mons, and Charleroi roads were the marked radii—tended greatly to facilitate the means of subsisting the troops, and to render that subsistence less burthensome to the country; while, at the same time, it offered to the Duke, in conjunction with the interior points of concentration, and with the efficient reserve stationed around the capital, full security for his being prepared to meet any emergency that might arise. The main points of interior concentration were (commencing from the right) Audenarde, Grammont, Ath, Enghien, Soignies, Nivelles, and Quatre-Bras. From whatever point, therefore, offensive operations might be directed against that portion of the Belgian frontier occupied by the army under Wellington—whether from Lisle, by Courtrai, or by Tournai, between the Lys and the Scheldt; from Condé, Valenciennes, or Maubeuge, by Mons, between the Sambre and the Scheldt; or from Maubeuge, Beaumont, or Philippeville, by Charleroi, between the Sambre and the Meuse—the Duke, by advancing to the threatened point with his reserve, and placing the remainder of his

troops in movement, had it in his power to concentrate at least two-thirds of his intended disposable force for the field, upon the line of the enemy's operations, within twenty-two hours after the receipt of intelligence of the actual direction and apparent object of those operations.* June.

* That the Duke was prepared, as far back as the 30th of April, to meet any attack that might be made upon him, may be seen by the following

SECRET MEMORANDUM

For H. R. H. the Prince of Orange, the Earl of Uxbridge, Lord Hill, and the Quarter Master General.

'Bruxelles, April 30th, 1815.

'I. Having received reports that the Imperial Guard had moved from Paris upon Beauvais, and a report having been for some days prevalent in the country that Buonaparte was about to visit the northern frontier, I deem it expedient to concentrate the cantonments of the troops, with a view to their early junction in case this country should be attacked, for which concentration the Quarter Master General now sends orders.

'II. In this case the enemy's line of attack will be either between the Lys and the Scheldt, or between the Sambre and the Scheldt, or by both lines.

'III. In the first case, I should wish the troops of the 4th division to take up the bridge on the Scheldt, near Avelghem, and with the regiment of cavalry at Courtrai, to fall back upon Audenarde, which post they are to occupy, and to inundate the country in the neighbourhood.

'IV. The garrison of Ghent are to inundate the country in the neighbourhood likewise, and that point is to be held at all events.

'V. The cavalry in observation between Menin and Furnes are to fall back upon Ostend; those between Menin and Tournai, upon Tournai, and thence to join their regiments.

'VI. The 1st, 2nd, and 3rd divisions of infantry are to be collected at the head-quarters of the divisions, and the cavalry at the head-quarters of their several brigades, and the whole to be in readiness to march at a moment's notice.

'VII. The troops of the Netherlands to be collected at Soignies and Nivelle.

'VIII. In case the attack should be made between the Sambre and the Scheldt, I propose to collect the British and the Hanoverians at and in the neighbourhood of Enghien, and the army of the Low Countries at and in the neighbourhood of Soignies and Braine le Comte.

'IX. In this case, the 2nd and 3rd divisions will collect at their respec-

June. The Prussian army, under the command of Prince Blücher von Wahlstadt, amounted to nearly 117,000 men, and was thus composed:—

Infantry	99,715
Cavalry	11,879
Artillery, waggon train, and engineers	5,303
	116,897 men & 312 guns.*

It was divided into four corps d'armée.

The 1st corps, commanded by Lieutenant General von Zieten, consisted of the 1st brigade, under General von Steinmetz; of the 2nd brigade, under General von Pirch II.;† of the 3rd brigade,

tive head-quarters, and gradually fall back towards Enghien with the cavalry of Colonel Arentschildt's and the Hanoverian brigade.

'X. The garrisons of Mons and Tournai will stand fast; but that of Ath will be withdrawn, with the 2nd division, if the works should not have been sufficiently advanced to render the place tenable against a *coup de main*.

'XI. General Sir W. Ponsonby's, Sir J. Vandeleur's, and Sir H. Vivian's brigades of cavalry will march upon Hal.

'XII. The troops of the Low Countries will collect upon Soignies and Braine-le-Comte.

'XIII. The troops of the 4th division and the 2nd hussars, after taking up the bridge at Avelghem, will fall back upon Audenarde, and there wait for further orders.

'XIV. In case of the attack being directed by both lines supposed, the troops of the 4th division and 2nd hussars, and the garrison of Ghent, will act as directed in Nos. III. and IV. of this memorandum; and the 2nd and 3rd divisions, and the cavalry, and the troops of the Low Countries, as directed in Nos. VIII., IX., X., XI., and XII.

'WELLINGTON.'

—*Despatches of the Duke of Wellington, compiled by Colonel Gurwood.*— Vol. xii. p. 337.

* For detailed returns, see Appendix VIII.

† Prussian general officers bearing the same family name, are usually distinguished by the addition of the Roman numerals. General von Pirch I. is named at p. 37.

under General von Jagow; of the 4th brigade, under General Count Henkel; of a cavalry-reserve, under Lieutenant General von Röder; and of an artillery-reserve, under Colonel von Lehmann. June.

The right of this corps d'armée, the head-quarters of which were at Charleroi, communicated with the left of the 1st corps of the Duke of Wellington's army. Its right brigade, the 1st, was cantoned in and around Fontaine l'evêque, which lies midway between Charleroi and Binche; the 2nd brigade, in Marchienne-au-Pont, on the Sambre; the 3rd brigade, in Fleurus; the 4th brigade, in Moustier-sur-Sambre; the reserve-cavalry in Sombref, and the reserve-artillery in Gembloux. The line of advanced posts of this corps extended from Bonne Esperance (two miles south-west of Binche) along the frontier of Lobbes, Thuin, and Gerpinnes, as far as Sossoye.

The 2d corps d'armée, commanded by General von Pirch I., consisted of the 5th brigade, under General von Tippelskirchen; of the 6th brigade, under General von Krafft; of the 7th brigade, under General von Brause; of the 8th brigade, under Colonel von Langen; of a cavalry-reserve, under General von Jürgass; and of an artillery-reserve, under Colonel von Röhl.

The head-quarters of this corps were at Namur, situated at the confluence of the Sambre and the Meuse, where also its 1st brigade was stationed;

June. the 6th brigade was cantoned in and around Thorembey-les-Beguignes; the 7th brigade in Heron; the 8th brigade in Huy; the reserve-cavalry in Hannut; and the reserve-artillery along the high road to Louvain. The line of advanced posts of this corps extended from Sossoye as far as Dinant on the Meuse, about midway between Namur and Givet.

The 3d corps d'armée, commanded by Lieutenant General von Thielemann, consisted of the 9th brigade, under General von Borke; of the 10th brigade, under Colonel von Kämpfen; of the 11th brigade, under Colonel von Luck; of the 12th brigade, under Colonel von Stülpnagel; of a cavalry-reserve, under General von Hobe; and of an artillery-reserve, under Colonel von Mohnhaupt.

The head-quarters of this corps were at Ciney: the 9th brigade was stationed at Asserre; the 10th brigade at Ciney; the 11th brigade at Dinant; the 12th brigade at Huy, on the Meuse; the reserve-cavalry between Ciney and Dinant; and the reserve-artillery at Ciney. The line of advanced posts of this corps extended from Dinant as far as Fabeline and Rochefort.

The 4th corps d'armée, commanded by General Count Bülow von Dennewitz, consisted of the 13th brigade, under Lieutenant General von Hacke; of the 14th brigade, under General von Ryssel; of the 15th brigade, under General von Losthin;

of the 16th brigade, under Colonel von Hiller; of a cavalry-reserve under General his Royal Highness Prince William of Prussia; and of an artillery-reserve, under Lieutenant Colonel von Bardeleben. June.

The head-quarters of this corps were at Liege, where was also stationed the 13th infantry-brigade; the 14th brigade was cantoned in and around Warremme; the 15th brigade at Hologne; the 16th brigade at Liers; the 1st brigade of reserve-cavalry at Tongern; the second brigade at Dalhem, and the 3rd brigade at Lootz; the reserve-artillery was cantoned in and about Gloms and Dalhem.

Prince Blücher's head-quarters were at Namur.

The points of concentration for the respective corps were therefore Fleurus, Namur, Ciney, and Liege. The four corps were so disposed that each could be collected at its own head-quarters within twelve hours; and it was fully practicable to form a junction of the whole army at any one of those points within twenty-four hours. At Namur, the most central point, it could of course be accomplished in much less time. Blücher had decided, in the event of an advance by the French across the line of the Sambre, by Charleroi, upon concentrating his army in a position in front of Sombref, a point upon the high road between Namur and Nivelles, about fourteen miles from the former place, and only eight miles from Quatre Bras,

June. the point of intersection of this road with the one leading directly from Charleroi to Brussels, and at which Wellington had agreed, in that case, to concentrate as large a force as time would admit, in order to check any advance in this direction, or to join Blücher's right flank, according to circumstances. Should the enemy advance along the left bank of the Meuse, towards Namur, this place would become the point of junction of the 1st, 2d, and 4th corps of the Prussian army; whilst the 3d, collecting at Ciney, would, after presenting a stout resistance at Dinant, operate as effectively as circumstances would admit, against the right of the line of attack; and should he advance by the right bank of the Meuse towards Ciney, the army would concentrate at this point, with the exception of the 4th corps, which would assemble at Liege as a reserve, for the better security of the left flank and of the communications with the Rhine.

Such were the dispositions of the allied commanders, who contemplated no change in their arrangements until the moment should arrive of the commencement of hostile demonstrations of a decided character, for which they were perfectly prepared, and for which a vigilant look-out was maintained along the general line of the advanced posts.

From the foregoing, however, it would appear that the concentration of Wellington's army on its own left, and that of Blücher's army on its

own right, required longer time than that in which they could have been respectively accomplished on other points; and further, that the distribution of the former was better calculated to meet the enemy's advance by Mons, and that of the latter to meet it by Namur, than to oppose a line of attack by Charleroi. This peculiar feature in the dispositions of the two commanders did not escape the vigilance of Napoleon, who, as will be seen in the sequel, made it subservient to his hopes of beating their armies in detail. June.

The French troops destined to constitute the grand army with which Napoleon had decided upon taking the field against the allied forces in Belgium, comprised the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 6th corps d'armée; 4 corps of cavalry; and the imperial guard: amounting altogether to 122,401 men:—

Infantry	84,235
Cavalry	21,665
Artillery, waggon-train, and engineers	16,501
	*122,401 and 350 guns.

* For detailed Returns, see Appendix IX. The above-mentioned force is computed from the returns furnished by French historians, but there is reason to believe it was somewhat greater. In the appendix to the "Geschichte des Feldzugs von 1815," by Damitz, it is stated that, according to the information obtained by the Allies immediately before the commencement of hostilities, the total amount was 130,000 men.—See Appendix X. According to a memorandum written by the Duke of Wellington at Brussels on the 16th May, 1815, the amount was *then* estimated at 126,000 men.—See Despatches of the Duke of Wellington, vol. xii. p. 394.

June. The 1st corps d'armée, commanded by Lieutenant General Count d'Erlon, consisted of the 1st infantry-division, under Lieutenant General Alix; of the 2nd infantry-division, under Lieutenant General Donzelot; of the 3rd infantry-division, under Lieutenant General Marcognet; of the 4th infantry-division, under Lieutenant General Durutte; and of the 1st light cavalry-division, under Lieutenant General Jaquinot; with 5 batteries of foot, and 1 of horse, artillery.

In the beginning of June this corps was stationed in and around Lille.

The 2nd corps d'armée, commanded by Lieutenant General Count Reille, consisted of the 5th infantry-division, under Lieutenant General Bachelu; of the 6th infantry-division, under Lieutenant General Prince Jerome Napoleon; of the 7th infantry-division, under Lieutenant General Girard; of the 9th infantry-division, under Lieutenant General Foy; and of the 2nd light cavalry-division, under Lieutenant General Piré; with 5 batteries of foot, and one of horse-artillery.

This corps was stationed in and around Valenciennes.

The 3rd corps d'armée, commanded by Lieutenant General Count Vandamme, consisted of the 10th infantry-division, under Lieutenant General Hubert; of the 11th infantry-division, under Lieutenant General Berthezene; of the 8th infantry-division, under Lieutenant General Le Fol;

and of the 3rd light cavalry-division, under Lieutenant General Domont; with 4 batteries of foot, and 1 of horse, artillery. June.

This corps was assembled in and around Mezieres.

The 4th corps d'armée, commanded by Lieutenant General Count Gérard, consisted of the 12th infantry-division, under Lieutenant General Pecheux; of the 13th infantry-division, under Lieutenant General Vichery; of the 14th infantry-division, under General Hulot; and of the 6th light cavalry-division, under Lieutenant General Morin; with 4 batteries of foot, and 1 of horse, artillery.

This corps occupied Metz, Longwy, and Thionville, and formed the basis of the army of the Moselle; but it was now decided that it should approach the Sambre, and unite itself with the grand army.

The 6th corps d'armée, commanded by Lieutenant General Count Lobau, consisted of the 19th infantry-division, under Lieutenant General Simmer; of the 20th infantry-division, under Lieutenant General Jeannin; of the 21st infantry-division, under Lieutenant General Teste; with 4 batteries of foot, and 1 of horse, artillery.

This corps was assembled in and around Laon.

The four corps forming the reserve-cavalry were placed under the command of Marshal Count Grouchy. The 1st, commanded by Lieutenant General Pajol, consisted of the 4th cavalry-division

June. (hussars), under Lieutenant General Soult; and of the 5th division (lancers and chasseurs), under Lieutenant General Subervie; with 2 batteries of horse artillery. The 2nd corps, commanded by Lieutenant General Excelmans, consisted of the 9th division (dragoons), under Lieutenant General Strolz; and of the 10th division (dragoons), under Lieutenant General Chastel; with 2 batteries of horse artillery. The 3rd corps, commanded by General Count de Valmy (Kellermann), consisted of the 11th division (dragoons and cuirassiers), under Lieutenant General L'Heritier; and of the 12th division (carabiniers and cuirassiers), under Lieutenant General Roussel; with 2 batteries of horse artillery. The 4th corps, commanded by Lieutenant General Milhaud, consisted of the 13th division (cuirassiers), under Lieutenant General Wathier; and of the 14th division (cuirassiers), under Lieutenant General Delort; with 2 batteries of horse artillery.

The principal portion of this reserve-cavalry lay in cantonments between the Aisne and the frontier.

The infantry of the imperial guard consisted of 4 regiments of grenadiers, under Lieutenant General Friant; of 4 regiments of chasseurs, under Lieutenant General Morand; of 2 regiments of voltigeurs, and 2 regiments of tirailleurs, under the command of Lieutenant General Duhesme. The cavalry of the guard consisted of

two regiments of heavy cavalry (grenadiers à cheval and dragoons), under General Guyot; and of 3 regiments of light cavalry (chasseurs à cheval and lancers), under General Lefèbvre-Desnouettes. Attached to the guard were 6 batteries of foot, and 4 batteries of horse, artillery, with 3 batteries of reserve-artillery; comprising altogether 96 pieces of cannon. These troops were principally in Paris. June.

The French Emperor having, upon the grounds explained in a former chapter, determined to take the field against the allied armies in Belgium, the commencement of active operations could no longer be deferred. When we reflect upon the disparity of force with which he was going to contend against two such generals as Wellington and Blücher, we are bound to acknowledge that it was an undertaking daring and perilous in the extreme, even for an individual of the dauntless and adventurous character of Napoleon. A delay of only a few weeks would have secured for him, by means of the vast organization which was in constant and rapid progress, a sufficient accession of disposable troops to have enabled him to effect a powerful diversion upon either Wellington's right, or Blücher's left, flank, and thus to impart an infinitely greater degree of weight and stability to his main operations; but then, on the other hand, this delay would also have brought the powerful armies of the confederated sovereigns across the whole line of his eastern frontier, and have led to the

June. consummation of that combined movement upon the capital, the execution of which it was his great aim to frustrate. But it was not the first time that Napoleon had advanced against such fearful superiority of numerical strength. In the previous year, when nearly surrounded by the victorious forces of Prussia, Austria, and Russia, when apparently overwhelmed by a succession of disasters, and when his army was daily diminishing by the desertion of newly-raised conscripts, and presenting the mere wreck of its former self, he was at the very *acmé* of his mental energy, and in the full possession of his determinate and all-subduing will. His great genius seemed to acquire additional vigour and elasticity, with the increasing desperation of his position; and darting with electric suddenness and rapidity, now upon one adversary and then upon another, maintaining with the renowned leaders of his detached forces, a combination of movements developing the highest order of strategy, he succeeded by his brilliant triumphs at Rheims, Montmirail, Champaubert, and Monterau, not only in stemming the torrent of invasion, but in causing the resumption of the diplomatic preliminaries of a peace. This peace, however, these very triumphs induced him, as if by a fatality, to reject with scorn and indignation, although the terms were honourable in the highest degree under his then existing circumstances. Hence, with such a retrospect, Napoleon might well indulge in hope

and confidence as to the result of the approaching campaign, notwithstanding the want of sufficient time for a greater development of his resources. A finer or a more gallant army, or one more complete and efficient in every respect, than that which he was going to lead in person, never took the field. He had selected for the line of his main operations the direct road to Brussels, by Charleroi, that being the road, as before remarked, on which Wellington's left, and Blücher's right, respectively rested, and which he designed to maintain by first overcoming the Prussian army, which was the most advanced on that line, and then attacking the Anglo-allied troops before they could be collected in sufficient strength to prevent his further progress; his grand object being to impede the junction of the two armies; to vanquish them in detail; to establish himself in Brussels; to arouse the dense population of Belgium, of which a vast proportion secretly adhered to his cause; to re-annex the country to the French empire; to excite the desertion of the Belgian soldiery from the service of Holland; to present a check by these means to the operations of the invading armies crossing the Rhine; perhaps also to enter into negotiations; and, at all events, to gain, what was to him of vital importance, *time* for the advance and co-operation of further reinforcements from France. June

The necessary orders were now despatched for the concentration of the grand army; and in order

June. to mask its movements as much as possible, the whole line of the Belgian frontier was studded with numerous detachments of the national guards furnished by the garrisons of the fortresses, more especially along that part of the frontier which passes in advance of Valenciennes, Condé, Lille, and even as far as Dunkirk; all the debouchés of which line were strongly occupied, the outposts tripled, and there was every apparent indication that either the principal attack, or at least a formidable diversion, was in course of preparation in that quarter.

These measures had the effect of strengthening the anticipations which Wellington had previously formed of offensive movements from the side of Lille and Valenciennes, and consequently of placing him still more upon his guard against any hasty and incautious junction of his forces with those of Blücher, until fully satisfied as to the true direction and object of Napoleon's main operation.*

On the 12th of June, Lieutenant Colonel von Wissell,† whose regiment, the 1st hussars of the King's German Legion, formed an extensive line of outposts in front of Tournai, reported to Major

* This circumstance has been entirely overlooked by certain historians, who have blamed the Duke for not having effected a more rapid concentration of his troops at Quatre-Bras on the 16th, by means of which he might have been enabled to detach an efficient force to the immediate support of Blücher's right flank at Ligny.

† Lieutenant Colonel von Wissell, K.C.H., died on the 30th of May, 1842.

General Sir Hussey Vivian,* to whose brigade the regiment belonged, that he had ascertained, from information on which he could rely, that the French army had assembled on the frontier, and was prepared to attack. Vivian desired him to report upon the subject to Lord Hill, to whose corps his regiment was attached while employed on this particular service. The next morning Vivian repaired in person to the outposts, and found that a French cavalry-picquet which had previously been posted opposite to Tournai, had a short time before marched to join the main army, and had been relieved by *douaniers*. These, upon being spoken to by Vivian, did not hesitate to say that their army was concentrating, and that if the allies did not advance, their troops would attack. On returning to his quarters, Vivian communicated what he had seen and heard to both Lord Hill and the Earl of Uxbridge, by whom the circumstances were made known to the Duke of Wellington. His Grace, however, for the reasons before stated, did not think the proper moment had arrived for making any alteration in the disposition of his forces. 13th of June.

Gérard's corps quitted Metz on the 6th of June, with orders to reach Philippeville by the 14th. The imperial guard began its march from Paris on the 8th, and reached Avesnes on the 13th, as did

* Lieutenant General Lord Vivian, G.C.B.; G.C.H., died on the 20th of August, 1842.

13th of June. also Lobau's corps from Laon. D'Erlon's corps from Lille, Reille's corps from Valenciennes, and Vandamme's corps from Mezières, likewise arrived at Maubeuge and Avesnes on the 13th. The four corps of reserve-cavalry concentrated upon the Upper Sambre.

The junction of the several corps on the same day, and almost at the same hour, (with the exception of the 4th, which joined the next day,) displayed the usual skill of Napoleon in the combination of movements. Their leaders congratulated themselves upon these auspicious preparations, and upon finding the "grand army" once more assembled in "all the pomp and circumstance of glorious war:" the appearance of the troops, though fatigued, was all that could be desired; and their enthusiasm was at the highest on hearing that the Emperor himself, who had quitted Paris at three o'clock on the morning of the 12th, and passed the night at Laon, had actually arrived amongst them.

Upon the following day the French army bivouacked on three different points. The left, consisting of D'Erlon's and Reille's corps, and amounting to about 44,000 men, was posted on the right bank of the Sambre at Solre-sur-Sambre. The centre, consisting of Vandamme's and Lobau's corps, of the imperial guard, and of the cavalry-reserves, amounting altogether to about 66,000 men, was at Beaumont, which was made the head-quarters. The right, composed of Gérard's corps,

and of a division of heavy cavalry, amounting altogether to about 16,000 men, was in front of Philippeville. The bivouacs were established in rear of some slight eminences, with a view to conceal their fires from the observation of the enemy.* 14th of June.

The army, while thus assembled, on the eve of opening the campaign, received through the medium of an "*ordre du jour*" the following spirit-stirring appeal from its chief:—

"Napoleon, by the Grace of God and the Constitutions of the Empire, Emperor of the French, etc., to the Grand Army.

"At the Imperial Head-quarters, Avesnes, June 14th, 1815.

"Soldiers! this day is the anniversary of Marengo and of Friedland, which twice decided the destiny of Europe. Then, as after Austerlitz, as after Wagram, we were too generous! We believed in the protestations and in the oaths of princes, whom we left on their thrones. Now, however, leagued together, they aim at the independence, and the most sacred rights of France. They have commenced the most unjust of aggressions. Let us, then, march to meet them. Are they and we no longer the same men?

"Soldiers! at Jena, against these same Prussians, now so arrogant, you were one to three, and at Montmirail one to six!

* For a detailed explanation of the position occupied by the French army on the 14th of June, see the "Ordre du Jour" of the 13th of June—Appendix XI.

14th of June.

"Let those among you who have been captives to the English, describe the nature of their prison-ships, and the frightful miseries they endured.

"The Saxons, the Belgians, the Hanoverians, the soldiers of the confederation of the Rhine, lament that they are compelled to use their arms in the cause of princes, the enemies of justice and of the rights of all nations. They know that this coalition is insatiable! After having devoured twelve millions of Poles, twelve millions of Italians, one million of Saxons, and six millions of Belgians, it now wishes to devour the states of the second rank in Germany.

"Madmen! one moment of prosperity has bewildered them. The oppression and the humiliation of the French people are beyond their power. If they enter France they will there find their grave.

"Soldiers! we have forced marches to make, battles to fight, dangers to encounter; but, with firmness, victory will be ours. The rights, the honour, and the happiness of the country will be recovered!

"To every Frenchman who has a heart, the moment is now arrived to conquer or to die!

"NAPOLEON."

"THE MARSHAL DUKE OF DALMATIA,
Major General."

CHAPTER IV.

Zieten ascertains and communicates to the allied commanders the assembling of French troops in his front—Blücher's dispositions—Position of the 1st Prussian corps d'armée under Zieten—Advance of the French army into Belgium on the 15th of June—The French force the Prussian outposts; cross the Sambre, and gain possession of Charleroi—Retreat of the different brigades of Zieten's corps upon Fleurus—Affair at Gilly—Zieten's corps concentrates in position between Ligny and St. Amand—Losses experienced by this corps on the 15th—The 2d and 3d Prussian corps d'armée, under Pirch and Thielemann, concentrate and bivouac on the night of the 15th, the former between Onoz and Mazy not far from Sombref, the latter in and around Namur—Bülow is desired to concentrate the 4th Prussian corps d'armée at Hannut—Cause of this operation being deferred until the 16th—Ney joins the French army, and receives from Napoleon the command of a detached corps destined to operate by the Brussels road from Charleroi—The advanced post at Frasne, upon the extreme left of the Duke of Wellington's army, receives intelligence of the French attack—Consequent movements of De Perponcher's Dutch-Belgian division—The Anglo-allied post at Frasne is driven in by the advanced guard of Ney's corps, the progress of which is checked by Prince Bernhard of Saxe Weimar's Dutch-Belgian brigade, in front of Quatre-Bras—Disposition of Ney's forces in the night of the 15th of June—Wellington is informed of Napoleon's advance, and makes his dispositions accordingly—Order of the movements of the Anglo-allied army—Disposition of the centre and right columns of the French army during the night of the 15th—Remarks on the result of Napoleon's operations on the 15th of June.

NAPOLEON, by his precautionary measures of strengthening his advanced posts, and of displaying along the whole line of the Belgian frontier an equal degree of vigilance and activity, had effectually concealed from his adversaries the combined movements of his several corps d'armée, and their concentration on the right bank of the

14th of June.

14th of June. Sambre. During the night of the 13th, however, the light reflected upon the sky by the fires of the French bivouacs, did not escape the vigilant observation of Zieten's outposts, whence it was communicated to the rear that these fires appeared to be in the direction of Beaumont, and in the vicinity of Solre-sur-Sambre; and on the following day intelligence was obtained of the arrival of Napoleon and his brother, Prince Jerome. Zieten immediately transmitted this information to Prince Blücher and to the Duke of Wellington. Nothing, however, was as yet positively known concerning the real point of concentration, the probable strength of the enemy, or his intended offensive movements. Late in the day, Zieten ascertained, through his outposts, that strong French columns, composed of all arms, were assembling in his front, and that every thing portended an attack on the following morning. Zieten's communication of this intelligence reached Blücher between nine and ten o'clock on the night of the 14th.

Simultaneous orders were despatched by eleven o'clock for the march of Bülow's corps d'armée from Liege to Hannut, of Pirch's corps from Namur upon Sombref, and for that of Thielemann's corps from Ciney to Namur. Zieten was directed to await the advance of the enemy in his position upon the Sambre, and, in the event of his being attacked by superior numbers, and compelled to retire, to effect his retreat as slowly as circum-

stances would permit, in the direction of Fleurus, so as to afford sufficient time for the concentration of the other three corps in rear of the latter point. 14th of June.

Zieten's position, and his line of advanced posts, have already been described.* His right brigade (the 1st), having its head-quarters at Fontaine-l'évêque, held the ground between Binche and the Sambre; his centre brigade (the 2d) lay along the Sambre, occupying Marchiennes, Dampremy, La Roux, Charleroi, Châtelet, and Gilly; a portion of his 3d brigade occupied Farciennes and Tamines, on the Sambre, while the remainder was posted in reserve between Fleurus and the Sambre; and his left brigade (the 4th) was extended along this river nearly as far as Namur. The reserve-cavalry of the 1st corps had been brought more in advance, and was now cantoned in the vicinity of the Piéton, having Gosselies for its point of concentration.†

In this position, Zieten, without making the slightest alteration, remained fully prepared for the expected attack on the morrow.‡

While Napoleon was occupied in prescribing his

* See page 37, chap. iii.

† Refer to the "Map of Part of Belgium."

‡ The vigilance of Zieten on the 14th, and the arrangements made by Blücher during that night, afford a complete refutation of the charge so frequently brought against the allied commanders, that the French attack took them by surprise. A further proof of the perfect readiness in which Zieten had for a long time previously held his corps to meet the enemy's first attack, is presented by the instructions contained in his orders of the 2d of May.—See Appendix XII.

15th of June. intended order of attack, he received a despatch from Count Gérard, announcing that Lieutenant General de Bourmont, Colonels Clouet and Villoutreys, attached to the 4th corps, had deserted to the enemy—a circumstance which induced the Emperor to make some alteration in his dispositions.*

The morning of the 15th had scarcely broken, when the French army commenced its march in three columns, from the three bivouacs already mentioned as having been taken up during the previous night. The left column advanced from Solre-sur-Sambre, by Thuin, upon Marchiennes; the centre from Beaumont, by Ham-sur-Heure, upon Charleroi; and the right column from Philippeville, by Gerpinnes, upon Châtelet.†

Towards four o'clock in the morning the engagement began along the line of the Prussian outposts, which were speedily driven in, and forced to retire upon their supports. Zieten, upon discovering the whole French army in motion, and perceiving by the direction of the advance of its columns, that

* When General de Bourmont was presented to Blücher, the latter could not refrain from evincing his contempt for the faithless soldier; and to those who endeavoured to appease him, and to impress him more favourably towards the general by directing his attention to the white cockade which he wore in a conspicuous fashion, the Prince bluntly remarked—"Einerlei, was das Volk für einen Zettel ansteckt! Hundsfott bleibt Hundsfott!"—an expression of which the following may be considered but a mild translation: "It matters not what a man sticks in his hat for a mark—a mean-spirited scoundrel always remains the same."

† For the order of movement of the French army on the 15th of June, see Appendix XIII.

Charleroi and its vicinity would probably form the main object of the attack, sent out the necessary orders to his brigades. The 1st was to retire upon Gosselies ; the 2nd was to defend the three bridges over the Sambre, at Marchiennes, Charleroi, and Châtelet, for a time sufficient to enable the 1st brigade to reach Gosselies, and thus to prevent its being cut off by the enemy, after which it was to retire behind Gilly ; the 3rd and 4th brigades, as also the reserve-cavalry and artillery, were to concentrate as rapidly as possible, and to take up a position in rear of Fleurus.* 15th of June.

The advanced guard of the left French column, supplied by Prince Jerome's division of Reille's corps, attacked Thuin with 2 battalions, from 4 to 5 squadrons, and 3 guns. The place was occupied by the 3rd battalion of the 2nd Westphalian landwehr, under Major von Monsterberg, who, after an obstinate and gallant resistance, was forced to retire upon Montigny, where he found Lieut. Colonel von Woisky, with 2 squadrons of the 1st West Prussian dragoons. The French succeeded in taking this village, and the retreat was then continued in good order, under the protection of Woisky's dragoons, towards Marchienne-au-Pont ; but before reaching this place, the latter were attacked, and completely overthrown by the French

* In order to obtain a clearer insight into the movements of the respective armies, the reader is recommended to place before him the "Map of Part of Belgium."

15th of June. cavalry; and the infantry getting into disorder at the same moment, were partly cut down, and many were taken prisoners. Lieut. Colonel von Woisky was wounded on this occasion, but continued, nevertheless, at the head of his men. At Marchienne-au-Pont stood the 2nd battalion of the 6th Prussian regiment. The bridge was barricaded, and with the aid of two guns, resolutely maintained against several attacks; after which these troops commenced their retreat upon Gilly, by Dampremy. In the latter place were 3 companies of the 1st battalion of the 2nd regiment of Westphalian landwehr, with 4 guns. These also retired about the same time towards Gilly, the guns protecting the retreat by their fire from the churchyard; after which they moved off as rapidly as possible towards Gilly, while the battalion marched upon Fleurus; but the 4th company, which defended the bridge of La Roux until Charleroi was taken, was too late to rejoin the latter, and therefore attached itself to the 1st brigade, which was retreating by its left flank.

Lieut. General Pajol's corps of light cavalry formed the advanced guard of the centre column of the French army: it was to have been supported by Vandamme's corps of infantry, but by some mistake, this general had not received his orders, and at six o'clock in the morning had not quitted his bivouac. Napoleon, perceiving the error, led forward the imperial guards in immediate support

of Pajol. As the latter advanced, the Prussian outposts, though hard pressed, retired, skirmishing in good order. At Couillet, on the Sambre, about a mile and a half below Charleroi, the French cavalry fell upon a company of the 3rd battalion of the 28th Prussian regiment, surrounded it, and forced it to surrender. Immediately afterwards, the French gained possession of Marcinelles, a village quite close to Charleroi, and connected with this town by a dike 300 paces in length, terminating at a bridge, the head of which was palisaded. Along this dike the French cavalry ventured to advance, but was suddenly driven back by the Prussian skirmishers, who lined the hedges and ditches intersecting the opposite slope of the embankment; a part of the village was retaken, and an attempt made to destroy the bridge. The French, however, having renewed the attack with increased force, succeeded in finally carrying both the dike and the bridge, and by this means effected their entrance into Charleroi. Major von Rohr, who commanded this post, now felt himself under the necessity of effecting his retreat with the 1st battalion of the 6th Prussian regiment, towards the preconcerted position in rear of Gilly, which he did in good order, though hotly pursued by detachments of Pajol's dragoons. 15th of June.

By eleven o'clock, the French were in full possession of Charleroi, as also of both banks of the Sambre above the town, and Reille's corps was

15th of June. effecting its passage over the river at Marchienne-au-Pont.

The right column of the French army, commanded by Count Gérard, having a longer distance to traverse, had not yet reached its destined point, Châtelet on the Sambre.

The 4th brigade of Zieten's corps, as also the advanced portion of the 3rd, continued their retreat towards Fleurus; General von Jagow, who commanded the latter, having left the two Silesian rifle-companies and the fusilier-battalion* of the 7th Prussian regiment at Farciennes and Tamines, for the purpose of watching the points of passage across the Sambre, and of protecting the left flank of the position at Gilly. But, from the moment the French made themselves masters of Charleroi, and of the left bank of the Sambre above that town, the situation of the 1st brigade under General von Steinmetz became extremely critical. Zieten immediately ordered General von Jagow, whose brigade was in reserve, to detach Colonel von Rüchel with the 29th regiment of infantry to Gosselies, for the purpose of facilitating General von Steinmetz's retreat. The colonel found that General von Röder (commanding the reserve-cavalry of the corps) had posted there the 6th regiment of Prussian Uhlans (lancers) under Lieutenant Colonel von Lützow,

* The Prussian regiments of infantry generally consisted of three battalions, of which the third was the fusilier-battalion.

to whom he confided the defence of Gosselies, which he occupied with the 2nd battalion of the 29th regiment, while he placed himself in reserve with the other two battalions. 15th of June.

As soon as the French had assembled in sufficient force at Charleroi, Napoleon ordered General Pajol to detach General Clary's brigade towards Gosselies, and to advance with the remainder of the 1st corps of reserve-cavalry towards Gilly. General Clary, with the 1st French hussars, reached Jumet, on the left of the Brussels road, and only but little more than a mile from Gosselies, before the 1st Prussian brigade had crossed the Piéton. He now advanced to attack Gosselies, but was met by Lieut. Colonel von Lützow and his dragoons, who defeated and repulsed him, and thus secured for General von Steinmetz time to pass the Piéton; and as soon as the latter had turned the defile of Gosselies, Colonel von Rüchel with the 29th regiment moved off to rejoin the 3rd brigade.

The check thus experienced by General Clary led to his being supported by Lieut. General Lefebvre-Desnouettes, with the light cavalry of the guard and the two batteries attached to this force; and a regiment from Lieut. General Duhesme's division of the young guard was advanced midway between Charleroi and Gosselies as a reserve to Lefebvre-Desnouettes. The advanced guard of Reille's corps, which had crossed

15th of June. the Sambre at Marchienne-au-Pont, was also moving directly upon Gosselies, with the design both of cutting off the retreat of Zieten's troops along the Brussels road, and of separating the Prussians from the Anglo-allied army. D'Erlon's corps, which was considerably in the rear, received orders to follow and support Reille.

General von Steinmetz, upon approaching Gosselies and perceiving the strength of the enemy and the consequent danger of being completely cut off, with the utmost promptitude and decision directed the fusilier-battalion of the 1st Westphalian landwehr to march against the enemy's left flank, with a view to divert his attention and to check his advance, while, protected by the 6th lancers and the 1st Silesian hussars, he continued his retreat towards Heppignies. This plan was attended with complete success; and von Steinmetz reached Heppignies with scarcely any loss, followed by General Girard at the head of the 7th division of the 2nd French corps d'armée, with the remainder of which Reille continued his advance along the Brussels road. Heppignies was already occupied by the 2nd and 3rd battalions of the 12th Prussian regiment, and with this increase of strength von Steinmetz drew up in order of battle, and upon Girard's attempting to force the place, after having previously occupied Ransart, he advanced against him, and drove him back in the direction of Gosselies. A brisk cannonade

ensued, which was maintained on the part of the Prussians only so long as it was deemed necessary for covering their retreat upon Fleurus. 15th of June.

In conformity with Zieten's orders, General von Pirch II., when forced to abandon Charleroi, retired to Gilly, where, having concentrated the 2nd brigade, about two o'clock, he took up a favourable position along a ridge in rear of a rivulet; his right resting upon the abbey of Soleilmont, his left extending towards Châtelineau, which flank was also protected by a detachment occupying the bridge of Châtelet, Gérard's corps not having as yet arrived at that point. He posted the fusilier-battalion of the 6th regiment in a small wood which lay in advance on the exterior slope of the ridge; 4 guns on the right, upon an eminence commanding the valley in front; 2 guns between this point and the Fleurus road, as also 2 guns on the right of the road, to impede as much as possible the advance of any columns towards Gilly. The sharpshooters of the fusilier-battalion of the 6th regiment, by lining some adjacent hedges afforded protection to the artillery. The 2nd battalion of the 28th regiment was stationed beyond the Fleurus road, near the abbey of Soleilmont, in such a manner as to be concealed from the enemy. The 1st battalion of this regiment stood across the road leading to Lambusart; and its fusilier-battalion was posted more to the left, towards Châtelet. The 1st and 2nd battalions of the 6th regiment, and the 2nd

15th of June. and fusilier-battalions of the 2nd Westphalian landwehr, formed the reserve. The 1st battalion of this regiment, as already remarked, was on the march to Fleurus from Dampremy. The 1st West Prussian dragoons were posted on the declivity of the ridge towards Châtelet: they furnished the advanced posts, and patrolled the valley of the Sambre, maintaining the communication with the detachment at Farciennes, belonging to the 3rd brigade.

General von Pirch, foreseeing that in the event of the enemy succeeding in turning his right, a rapid advance along the Fleurus road would be the means of greatly molesting, if not of seriously endangering, his retreat upon Lambusart, took the precaution of having this road blocked up by an *abatis* in the wood through which it led.

Vandamme did not reach Charleroi until three o'clock in the afternoon, when he received orders to pursue the Prussians, in conjunction with Grouchy, along the Fleurus road. It was, however, a considerable time before any advance was made. In the first place, the whole of Vandamme's corps had to cross the Sambre by a single bridge; secondly, both generals were deceived by exaggerated reports concerning the strength of the Prussians in rear of the Fleurus woods; and Grouchy, who had gone forward to reconnoitre, returned to the Emperor with a request for further instructions. Upon this, Napoleon undertook a reconnaissance in person, accompanied by the four squadrons *de service*;

and having formed an opinion that the amount of force in question did not exceed 18 or 20,000 men, he gave his orders for the attack of General von Pirch's brigade. 15th of June.

The French generals having directed their preparatory dispositions from the windmill near the farm of Grand-drieu, opened the engagement about six o'clock in the evening, with a fire from two batteries. Three columns of infantry advanced in echelon from the right, the first directing its course towards the little wood occupied by the fusilier-battalion of the 6th Prussian regiment; the second passing to the right of Gilly; and the third winding round the left of this village. The attack was supported by two brigades of General Excelmans' cavalry-corps, namely, those of Generals Bourthe and Bonnemain; of which one was directed towards Châtelet, thus menacing the Prussian left flank, and the other advanced along the Fleurus road.

The battery attached to the 2nd Prussian brigade was in the act of replying with great spirit to the superior fire from the French artillery, and the light troops were already engaged, when General von Pirch received Zieten's orders to avoid an action against superior numbers, and to retire by Lambusart upon Fleurus. Perceiving the formidable advance and overwhelming force of the enemy, he did not hesitate a moment in carrying those orders into effect, and made his dis-

15th of June. positions accordingly; but the retreat had scarcely commenced when his battalions were vigorously assailed by the French cavalry. Napoleon, in the hope of profiting by this retrograde movement, sent against the retreating columns the four squadrons *de service* of the guard, under General Letort, a distinguished cavalry-officer attached to his staff. The Prussian infantry withstood the repeated attacks of the French cavalry with undaunted bravery, and, aided by the gallant exertions of Lieut. Colonel von Woisky, who boldly met the enemy with the 1st West Prussian dragoons, and checked his progress, the greater part of it succeeded in gaining the wood of Fleurus. The fusilier-battalion of the 28th regiment (of which, it will be recollected, one company had previously been captured on the right bank of the Sambre) was the only column broken on this occasion. It had been ordered to retire into the wood by Rondchamp, but before it could complete the movement, it was overtaken by the enemy's cavalry, by which it was furiously assailed, and suffered a loss of two-thirds of its numbers. The fusilier-battalion of the 6th regiment was more fortunate. When about five hundred paces from the wood, it was attacked by the enemy's cavalry on the plain, but forming square, and reserving its fire until the French horsemen had approached within twenty or thirty paces, it gallantly repelled several charges. As the vigour with which these

attacks were made began to slacken, the battalion cleared its way with the bayonet through the cavalry that continued hovering round it. One of its companies immediately extended itself along the edge of the wood, and kept the French cavalry at bay. The latter suffered severely on this occasion, and General Letort who led the attacks, was mortally wounded. 15th of June.

The Brandenburg dragoons had been detached by Zieten in support of Von Pirch's brigade, and opportunely reaching the field of action, made several charges against the French cavalry, which they repulsed and compelled to relinquish its pursuit.

Pirch's brigade now took up a position in front of Lambusart, which was occupied by some battalions of the 3d brigade, and General von Röder joined it with his remaining three regiments of cavalry, and a battery of horse artillery. At this moment the French cavalry, which was formed up in position, opened a fire from three batteries of horse artillery, and thus brought on a cannonade, with which, however, the affair terminated.

The 1st Prussian brigade having safely executed its retreat from Heppignies, towards Fleurus, reached St. Amand about eleven o'clock at night. The detachments left by the 3d brigade at Farciennes and Tamines, had been previously called in, and effected their retreat without any molestation, as did also, subsequently, the 2d brigade

15th of June. from Lambusart, by Boulet, towards Fleurus, protected by the reserve-cavalry.

Zieten's corps, at three o'clock in the morning, had possessed a line of advanced posts, from Dinant on the Meuse, crossing the Sambre at Thuin, and extending as far as Bonne Eperance, in advance of Binche, thus stretching along a space of from forty to fifty miles in length: its main force occupied the Sambre from Thuin as far as its confluence with the Meuse, an extent of, at least, thirty-six miles, exclusive of the numerous windings throughout the whole course of the river between those two points. The men had, since daybreak, been constantly under arms, in motion, and almost as constantly engaged, pursued, and assailed upon all points by an overwhelming superiority of force, headed by the élite of the French cavalry; and it was not until about eleven o'clock at night that the corps effected its concentration in position between Ligny and St. Amand, at a distance varying from fourteen to twenty miles in rear of its original extended line of outposts; after having successfully and gloriously fulfilled the arduous task imposed upon it of gaining sufficient time for the concentration, on the following day, of all the Prussian corps, by stemming, as well as its scattered force would admit, the imposing advance of the whole French army.

The loss of the 1st Prussian corps d'armée on the 15th of June amounted to 1200 men. The

fusilier-battalions of the 28th regiment and of the 2d Westphalian landwehr, reduced to mere skeletons, were united, and formed into one battalion. 15th of June.

Before ten o'clock on the morning of the 15th a further order was despatched from the Prussian head-quarters to the 3d corps d'armée, to the effect that after resting during the night at Namur, it was to continue its march upon the morning of the 16th towards Sombref. At the same time an order was sent to the 4th corps, directing it to advance from Hannut upon Gembloux. By three o'clock in the afternoon of the 15th, the 2d corps d'armée had taken up the position assigned to it between Onoz and Mazy in the immediate vicinity of Sombref, with the exception, however, of the 7th brigade, which, having been stationed in the most remote of the quarters occupied by the corps, did not reach Namur until midnight. Here the latter found an order for its continuance in Namur until the arrival of the 3d corps d'armée; but as this had already taken place, the brigade, after a few hours' rest, resumed its march, and joined its corps at Sombref about ten o'clock in the morning of the 16th June. Thielemann passed the night at Namur, which he occupied with the 10th brigade; the 9th brigade bivouacked on the right, and the 11th on the left of Belgrade, a village at a short distance from the town, on the road to Sombref; the 12th brigade in rear of the 9th; the reserve-cavalry at Flavinne, between that road and the

15th of June. Sambre; and the reserve-artillery on the left of the road.

It has already been explained that on the 13th, Blücher sent off an order to Bülow desiring him to assemble his troops on the left bank of the Meuse, and to make arrangements for their reaching Hannut in one march; and that on the 14th, a second despatch was forwarded, requiring him to concentrate the 4th corps at Hannut. This last order reached Bülow at half-past ten o'clock on the morning of the 15th, but as the troops were already on the march and could not all be made acquainted with the new dispositions which this change rendered necessary, the general being perfectly unconscious of the commencement of hostilities, which, indeed, he had expected would be preceded by a declaration of war, was induced to defer the execution of this order until the following day—the more readily so from the circumstance of his having been fully of opinion that it was in contemplation to assemble the whole army at Hannut. He made a report to that effect to head-quarters, with the intimation that he would be at Hannut by mid-day of the 16th. Captain von Below, on Bülow's staff, who carried this despatch, arrived at nine o'clock in the evening of the 15th at Namur, where he discovered that the head-quarters of the army had been transferred to Sombref. About mid-day of the 15th, another despatch (in addition to the one sent at ten

o'clock) was forwarded to Bülow, desiring him to extend his march to Sombref. The orderly who carried it was directed to proceed to Hannut, the presumed head-quarters of Bülow's corps on that day. On reaching that place, the orderly found the previous despatch lying in readiness for the general, towards whom he then went on with both despatches. The orders which they contained had now, however, become impracticable, in consequence of Bülow's not having immediately carried into effect the *first* order to collect at Hannut; and thus by one of those mischances which, in war, occasionally mar the best planned operations, the opportune arrival of the 4th Prussian corps at the battle of Ligny, which would in all probability have changed the aspect of affairs, was rendered a matter of impossibility.* 15th of June.

* Had this order been accompanied by the slightest intimation that it was given in consequence of information received respecting the concentration of the French army, the hero of Dennewitz, whose zeal, intelligence, and activity had shone forth on so many important occasions, would not have hesitated an instant in fulfilling its instructions to the letter; but he looked upon it as a mere matter of precaution, and being utterly ignorant of the outbreak of hostilities, he deemed it needless to issue the second order while the troops were acting on the first one. He considered that if a change in their order of march was made, instead of halting in the quarters already prepared for them, they would be compelled to bivouac at Hannut, which place they could not reach before night, and then only in an exhausted condition. He thought it better to order their march to be resumed at day-break of the 16th, and directed upon Hannut. From the moment, however, that he received the third pressing order, for his speedy march upon Sombref, and was made sensible of his error, his exertions to repair the latter by accelerating in every possible way the advance of his corps, were most conspicuous; but there was no longer any chance of reaching Sombref in sufficient time to support the remainder of the army

15th of June. Late in the evening, and after Prince Blücher had established his head-quarters at Sombref, Captain von Below arrived with the before-mentioned report from Count Bülow; on receiving which, his Highness was made sensible that he could no longer calculate with certainty upon being joined by the 4th corps on the following day.

It was seven o'clock in the evening of the 15th, when Marshal Ney, who had just arrived, joined the Emperor near Charleroi, at the point where the road to Fleurus branches off from the one to Brussels.* Having expressed the pleasure he felt at seeing him, Napoleon gave him the command of the 1st and 2d corps d'armée; explaining at the same time that Reille was advancing with three divisions upon Gosselies; that d'Erlon would pass the night at Marchienne-au-Pont; that he would find under his orders Piré's light cavalry-division;

on the field of battle. He had also entertained an idea that a general concentration of the army would be effected at Hannut, and that as his corps was the nearest to that point, its movement need not partake of the character of a forced march. An error of this kind, however, though committed in ignorance of the commencement of hostilities, can only be palliated, not justified, by such considerations.

* It was not until the 11th of June, on the eve of Napoleon's departure from Paris, that Ney received an order to join the army. He reached Beaumont late in the night of the 14th, but was unable the next morning to follow the Emperor (who had started at two o'clock) in consequence of his not having any horses at his disposal, his own not having arrived. However, on hearing that Marshal Mortier was detained in the town by illness, he bought two horses from him, as did also his first aid-de-camp, Colonel Heymès, who had accompanied him from Paris, whereupon they both proceeded towards the army.

as also the two regiments of chasseurs and lancers of the guard, of which, however, he was not to make use except as a reserve. "To-morrow," added the Emperor, "you will be joined by the reserve-corps of heavy cavalry under Kellermann. Go and drive back the enemy." 15th of June.

It has already been explained in the preceding chapter, that the extreme left of the Duke of Wellington's army, composed of De Perponcher's 2d Dutch-Belgian division, rested upon the Charleroi road to Brussels. The 2d brigade of this division, under Colonel his Serene Highness Prince Bernhard of Saxe-Weimar, was thus located:— 1st battalion of the 2d regiment of Nassau, at Hautain-le-val; the 2d battalion, at Frasne and Villers-Peruin; the 3d battalion, at Bézy, Sart-à-Mavelines, and Quatre-Bras; both battalions of the regiment of Orange-Nassau, at Genappe. There was also at Frasne a Dutch battery of horse artillery.

Early on the morning of the 15th, these troops were lying quietly in their cantonments, perfectly unconscious of the advance of the French army, when they heard a brisk cannonade at a distance in the direction of Charleroi; but not having received the slightest intimation of the enemy's approach, they concluded that the firing proceeded from the Prussian artillery-practice, which they had frequently heard before, and to which they had therefore become accustomed. Gradually

15th of June. towards noon, however, the cannonade became more distinctly audible, and the arrival of a wounded Prussian soldier completely set at rest all doubt as to the advance of the French. An orderly was immediately despatched with the intelligence to the regimental head-quarters, whence it was also communicated to General de Perponcher's head-quarters at Nivelles. In the meantime, Major von Normann, who commanded the 2d battalion of the 2d regiment of Nassau, drew up the latter with the battery in position in rear of Frasne, and upon the road to Quatre-Bras, after having posted a picquet of observation in advance of the village.

Perponcher lost not a moment in ordering both brigades of his division to hasten towards their respective points of assembly; the 1st brigade, under General Bylandt to Nivelles, and the 2d, under Prince Bernhard to Quatre-Bras.

About five o'clock in the evening, Major von Normann's picquet was attacked and dispersed by Piré's lancers, who soon afterwards advanced against the battalion itself; but the fire of grape and musquetry with which they were received was so vigorous and so well maintained as to induce them to retire beyond its range.

Later in the evening, the 5th infantry-division of Reille's corps arrived at Frasne, whereupon Piré's light cavalry pushed forward *en reconnaissance;* drove back the 2d battalion of the 2d

regiment of Nassau, which retired under cover of a smart fire from the Dutch battery, until it finally threw itself into the wood of Bossu on its right as it approached Quatre-Bras, while the battery continued firing in retreat along the high road as far this latter point. Here Prince Bernhard had drawn up the remainder of his brigade, after having detached two companies of the 1st battalion of the 2d regiment of Nassau to keep up the communication with the 2d battalion in the wood of Bossu; and by the determined show of resistance which he displayed, as well as by the vigorous cannonade which he maintained, Piré's advanced guard, the left flank of which became endangered by the Dutch occupying the wood of Bossu, was forced to retire in its turn, which it did unmolested, and brought back intelligence that Quatre-Bras was occupied by ten battalions with artillery, and that Wellington's troops were moving to concentrate at this important point. 15th of June.

At ten o'clock at night Ney's forces were thus disposed:—Piré's light cavalry-division and Bachelu's infantry-division occupied Frasne, a village situated upon the Brussels road, about two miles and a half on the French side of Quatre-Bras;* the two regiments of chasseurs and lancers

* The village of Frasne is a little to the left of the high road. There is also a hamlet of the same name on the other side of that road, and a mile and a quarter nearer to Quatre-Bras: it is situated upon what are usually termed the heights of Frasne.

15th of June. of the guard were in reserve in rear of Frasne; Reille was with two divisions, and the artillery attached to them, at Gosselies; these divisions ensured the communication until the arrival of d'Erlon's corps, which was to remain that night at Marchienne-au-Pont. The remaining division of Reille's corps (Girard's) was at Heppignies, and thus served to maintain the communication with the main column under Napoleon. The troops were greatly fatigued by having been kept constantly on the march since three o'clock in the morning; the strength of the different regiments, the names of their colonels, and even of the generals, were unknown to the Marshal, as also the number of men that had been able to keep up with the heads of the columns at the end of this long march. These circumstances, combined with the information brought in from Quatre-Bras, induced Ney to decline risking a night attack upon that point; and he contented himself with taking up a position in advance of Frasne. Having issued such orders as he deemed essential, and enjoined the most vigilant look-out, he returned to Charleroi, where he arrived about midnight; partook of supper with Napoleon (who had just arrived from the right wing of the army), and conferred with the Emperor upon the state of affairs until two o'clock in the morning.

It was between three and four o'clock in the afternoon of the 15th that the Duke of Wellington

received information of the advance of the French army. The Duke was fully prepared for this intelligence, though uncertain how soon it might arrive. The reports which had been made to him from the outposts of his own army, especially from those of the 1st hussars of the King's German legion, stationed in the vicinity of Mons and Tournai, gave sufficient indication that the enemy was concentrating his forces. But, as observed in the preceding chapter, his Grace was determined to make no movement until the real line of attack should become manifest; and hence it was, that if the attack had been made even at a later period, his dispositions would have remained precisely the same.* 15th of June.

The Duke at once gave orders for the whole of his troops to hold themselves in immediate readiness to march. At the same time an express was despatched to Major General Dörnberg,† who had been posted in observation at Mons, requiring information concerning any movement that might

* I had hoped that the statements so erroneously made by some writers, imputing to the Duke that he was taken by surprise, were not countenanced at the present day, since such statements, when submitted to an impartial military investigation of all the concurrent circumstances, must be found totally groundless; but I regret to perceive that in a work very recently published, and enjoying a considerable degree of celebrity, great pains are taken to prove that the Duke really did allow himself to be surprised, and to show that the allied commanders were "*out-generaled*" by Napoleon, because their armies were not respectively concentrated at *Waterloo* and *Wavre, before* the opening of the campaign!

† Now Sir William de Dörnberg, K.C.B.; G.C.H; Lieut. General in the Hanoverian service.

15th of June. have been made on the part of the enemy in that direction.

The following were the movements ordered by the Duke.* Upon the left of the army, which was nearest to the presumed point of attack—Perponcher's and Chassé's Dutch-Belgian divisions were to be assembled that night at Nivelles, on which point Alten's British division (the 3rd) was to march as soon as collected at Braine-le-Comte; but this movement was not to be made until the enemy's attack upon the right of the Prussian army and the left of the Allied army had become a matter of certainty. Cooke's British division (the 1st) was to be collected that night at Enghien, and to be in readiness to move at a moment's notice.

Along the central portion of the army—Clinton's British division (the 2nd) was to be assembled that night at Ath, and to be in readiness also to move at a moment's notice. Colville's British division (the 4th) was to be collected that night at Grammont, with the exception of the troops beyond the Scheldt, which were to be moved to Audenarde.

Upon the right of the army—Stedmann's Dutch-Belgian division, and Anthing's Dutch-Belgian (Indian) brigade were, after occupying Audenarde with 500 men, to be assembled at Sotteghem, so as to be ready to march in the morning.

The cavalry were to be collected that night at

* Appendix, No. XIV.

Ninhove, with the exception of the 2d hussars of the King's German Legion, who were to remain on the look-out between the Scheldt and the Lys; and of Dörnberg's brigade, with the Cumberland hussars, which were to march that night upon Vilvorde, and to bivouac on the high road near to that town. 15th of June.

The reserve was thus disposed—Picton's British division (the 5th), the 81st British regiment, and Best's Hanoverian brigade (of Cole's division), were to be in readiness to march from Brussels at a moment's notice. Vincke's Hanoverian brigade (of Picton's division) was to be collected that night at Hal, and to be in readiness at day-light on the following morning to move towards Brussels, and to halt on the road between Alost and Assche for further orders. The Duke of Brunswick's corps was to be collected that night on the high road between Brussels and Vilvorde. Kruse's Nassau brigade was to be collected at day-light on the following morning upon the Louvain road, and to be in readiness to move at a moment's notice. The reserve-artillery was to be in readiness to move at day-light.

A little before ten o'clock on the same evening, a further communication reached the Duke from Prince Blücher, announcing the crossing of the Sambre by the French army, headed by Napoleon in person; and the required intelligence from other quarters having arrived almost at the same

15th of June. moment, and confirmed him in the opinion 'that the enemy's movement upon Charleroi was the real attack,' he gave the following orders for the march of his troops in the direction of Quatre-Bras :*—Alten's division to continue its movement from Braine-le-Comte upon Nivelles. Cooke's division to move from Enghien upon Braine-le-Comte. Clinton's and Colville's divisions to move from Ath, Grammont, and Audenarde, upon Enghien. The cavalry to continue its movement from Ninhove upon Enghien.

The disposition of the French left column, under Ney, during the night of the 15th, has already been shown. The centre column of the French army was thus located—Vandamme's corps bivouacked in the wood of Fleurus ; Pajol's corps of light cavalry at Lambusart ; the 3d light cavalry-division, under Domon, on the left, at the outlet of the wood, and the heavy cavalry-corps of Excelmans between the light cavalry and Vandamme ; the guards bivouacked between Charleroi and Gilly ; and Lobau's corps, together with Milhaud's heavy cavalry-corps, lay in rear of Charleroi. The right column, consisting of Gérard's corps, bivouacked in front of the bridge of Châtelet, which point it had reached during the evening.

The result of the proceedings on the 15th was

* Appendix, No XV.

highly favourable to Napoleon. He had completely effected the passage of Sambre; he was operating with the main portion of his forces directly upon the preconcerted point of concentration of Blücher's army, and was already in the immediate front of the chosen position, before that concentration could be accomplished; he was also operating with another portion upon the high road to Brussels, and had come in contact with the left of Wellington's troops; he had also placed himself so far in advance upon this line, that even a partial junction of the forces of the allied commanders was already rendered a hazardous operation, without a previous retrograde movement; and he thus had it in his power to bring the principal weight of his arms against the one, whilst, with the remainder of his force, he held the other at bay. This formed the grand object of his operations on the morrow. But however excellent, or even perfect, this plan of operation may appear in theory, still there were other circumstances, which if taken into consideration, would scarcely seem to warrant a well-grounded anticipation of a successful issue. Napoleon's troops had been constantly under arms, marching, and fighting since two o'clock in the morning, the hour at which they broke up from their position at Solre-sur-Sambre, Beaumont, and Philippeville, within the French frontier: they required time for rest and refreshment; they lay widely scattered

15th of June.

15th of June. between their advanced posts and the Sambre; Ney's forces were in detached bodies, from Frasne as far as Marchienne-au-Pont, the halting-place of d'Erlon's corps; and although Vandamme's corps was in the wood of Fleurus, Lobau's corps and the guards were halted at Charleroi, and Gérard's corps at Châtelet. Hence, instead of an imposing advance, with the first glimmering of the dawn of the 16th, the whole morning would necessarily be employed by the French in effecting a closer junction of their forces, and in making their preparatory dispositions for attack; an interval of time invaluable to the Allies, by the greater facility which it afforded them for the concentration of a sufficient force to hold their enemy in check, and to frustrate his design of defeating them in detail.

In taking a calm retrospect of the dispositions made by Napoleon on the night of the 15th of June, we become strongly impressed with a conviction, that to the laxity of those dispositions, to the absence which they indicated of that energetic perseverance and restless activity which characterized the most critical of his operations in former wars, may, in a very great degree, be attributed the failure of the campaign on the part of the French. The great advantages derived by Napoleon from the result of his operations during the 15th, have already been set forth; but of what avail were those advantages to him, if he neglected

the requisite measures for effectually retaining them within his grasp; or if, having secured them, he hesitated in following them up with the promptitude and energy which their complete development demanded of him? His position, if judged by that of his most advanced forces, was all that could be desired; but, by fatally neglecting to concentrate the remainder of his troops in the immediate support of that advance, the important advantages which such a position held forth were completely neutralized. Doubtless the troops required rest; but, if one portion required it more than another, it was that which now lay most in advance: they had performed the longest march, and had withstood, in addition, the whole brunt of the action; so that there was no reason whatever why the remainder of the French army should not have been so far advanced as to afford direct support to the important position taken up by the leading divisions: that which had been so successfully effected by the heads of the columns, might have been attained with infinitely greater ease and security by the masses which followed. And even supposing that serious impediments stood in the way of the full accomplishment of this concentration, such as the usual delays occasioned by the lengthening out of the columns of march, to what did they amount in comparison with so many brilliant instances of what had been overcome by the noble and heroic efforts of a French army

15th of June.

15th of June. headed by Napoleon? Had it even required some sacrifice, which at the most could only have consisted in the temporary diminution of strength, by the loss of stragglers on the march, what was this when placed in the balance with the fulfilment of the grand design of Napoleon's invasion of Belgium—preventing the junction of the allied armies, and overthrowing them in detail? The commencement of this design, in which the essential requisite was rapidity of movement, had been eminently successful: a vantage-ground had been gained which offered the most encouraging prospect of success: of Blücher's four corps, only one, Zieten's, had assembled in the chosen position of Ligny on the night of the 15th; Pirch's, which had arrived from Namur, was in bivouac between Onoz and Mazy, about six miles from Ligny; Thielemann's corps, which had quitted its cantonments around Ciney at half-past seven o'clock in the morning, passed the night at Namur, about fifteen miles from Ligny; Bülow's corps, supposed by Blücher to be then at Hannut, was still at Liege, about sixty miles distant from Ligny. Between this position of Ligny and that occupied by the leading divisions of Napoleon's main army, namely the villages of Lambusart, Wagnée, and the wood of Fleurus, there was an interval of not more than from two to three miles! Hence every thing was favourable to the French Emperor's plan, which only required to be carried on with

the same vigour and activity that had marked its commencement; the fate of Napoleon, of France, and of Europe, hung upon its issue; not an hour, not a moment should have been suffered to pass unheeded; and had the French right been concentrated during the night in this position, as also the left under Ney, between Gosselies and Frasne, and had an impetuous attack, with overwhelming force, been made not later than five o'clock on the following morning, upon both Zieten's and Pirch's corps, not at that time united, it is very possible that these troops would have been beaten in detail, that Thielemann's corps, advancing from Namur, would either have shared the same fate, or have moved off in the direction of Hannut or Liege to effect a junction with Bülow, whilst Ney would either have been enabled to secure the important point of Quatre-Bras before the arrival of any considerable portion of the Anglo-allied troops, or would have held his own force advantageously disposed for a junction with that of Napoleon, on the latter moving to the left, by the Namur road, for the purpose of bringing the great mass of his army against Wellington. Instead of this, what happened? Of the French right, its main force remained the whole night at Charleroi and Châtelet, on the Sambre, whilst between the advance of Ney's forces at Frasne and his rear at Marchienne-au-Pont, there was an interval of about twelve miles. Napoleon did not advance

15th of June.

15th of June. towards Fleurus until between eleven and twelve o'clock on the 16th, by which time Zieten's, Pirch's, and Thielemann's corps were all concentrated and in position, and he did not commence the battle of Ligny until nearly three o'clock in the afternoon; while Ney, on his side, in consequence of his operations having been rendered subordinate to those of the Emperor, delayed to advance with any degree of vigour until between two and three o'clock, about which time Wellington's reserve reached Quatre-Bras, from Brussels, and joined the forces then engaged in front of that point!

CHAPTER V.

On the morning of the 16th, Wellington's troops are in movement upon Nivelles and Quatre-Bras — The Dutch-Belgian detachment at the latter point is reinforced, and becomes engaged with the French advanced guard—The Prince of Orange arrives, and succeeds in forcing back the French upon Frasne—Ney's views and dispositions—Wellington arrives in person at Quatre-Bras—He proceeds to the Prussian head-quarters for the purpose of holding a conference with Blücher—Adopted plan of operations—Instructions received by Ney from Napoleon—Ney's advance—The Prince of Orange's dispositions to meet it—Relative strength—The Prince of Orange retires towards Quatre-Bras, occupies the wood of Bossu, and endeavours to maintain the post of Gemioncourt—Arrival of Picton's division—also of Van Merle's light cavalry-brigade—Van Merle advances in support of Perponcher's infantry—Both are driven back; the former to Quatre-Bras, the latter into the wood of Bossu, which is now attacked by the French—The latter occupy Gemioncourt and Piermont—Ney's position—Arrival of the principal portion of the Brunswick troops—Relative strength—Part of the Brunswick corps posted between the Charleroi road and the wood of Bossu—French attack—Wellington decides on meeting it—Advance of Picton with the 5th British division—The French infantry gallantly repulsed by the British—Attack upon the Brunswickers—The Duke of Brunswick makes an ineffectual charge at the head of his lancers—Retreat of the Brunswickers—Fall of the Duke of Brunswick—Conspicuous gallantry of the 42d and 44th British regiments—The French cavalry advances as far as Quatre-Bras—Is checked by the 92d Highlanders—Kellermann joins Ney with L'Heritier's cavalry-division—Relative strength—The French cavalry attacks the British squares—Picton advances his infantry into the midst of the French cavalry—Remarkable steadiness of the British squares—Manner in which the charges of the French cavalry were executed—The French are rapidly gaining possession of the entire wood of Bossu, are reinforcing their light troops in Piermont, and are preparing to renew their attack upon Quatre-Bras—Alten joins Wellington with two infantry-brigades of the 3d division—Ney is joined by the remaining division of Kellermann's corps of heavy cavalry—Relative strength—Halkett's British infantry-brigade posted between the wood of Bossu and the Charleroi road—Kielmansegge's Hanoverian infantry-brigade advances along the Namur road to reinforce

and support Picton's division—Ney, after despatching an order to d'Erlon to join him without delay, commences another general attack—The 69th British regiment is attacked and dispersed by French cuirassiers—Vigorous assault along the whole of the Anglo-allied line—Arrival of British and German artillery—French cuirassiers driven back in confusion from Quatre-Bras—Ney receives intelligence that d'Erlon's corps has been ordered by Napoleon to march towards the Prussian extreme right on the field of Ligny, and shortly afterwards a despatch reaches him, requiring him to attack and repulse whatever enemy may be in his front, and then to fall upon the Prussian right—Two French foot-batteries suddenly open a fire from the edge of the wood of Bossu upon Halkett's brigade and the Brunswick infantry, which are forced to retire—Gallant conduct of Lloyd's British foot-battery—Advance of French infantry against Quatre-Bras—The latter charged and pursued by the 92d Highlanders—Vigorous attack upon the left of Wellington's line successfully repelled—The French cavalry continues its attacks upon the central portion of the Anglo-allied army—Ney receives a further despatch from the Emperor, urging him to comply immediately with the instructions previously given — Arrival of Brunswick reinforcement—also of the 1st British division under Cooke—Relative strength—The British guards succeed in forcing the French out of the wood of Bossu—Signal defeat of French cavalry by the British guards and the Brunswick guard-battalion—Wellington's victorious advance—Ney withdraws the whole of his forces to the heights of Frasne, on which they bivouack for the night—D'Erlon joins Ney after the termination of the action—Losses in killed and wounded—Remarks upon the battle.

16th of June.

WITH the early dawn of the 16th of June, the whole of the Duke of Wellington's forces were in movement towards Nivelles and Quatre-Bras. Previously to starting from Brussels for the latter point, his Grace despatched an order for the movement of the cavalry and of Clinton's British division upon Braine-le-Comte, as also of the troops under Prince Frederick of the Netherlands, consisting of Stedmann's Dutch-Belgian division, and of Anthing's Dutch-Belgian (Indian) brigade, from Sotteghem to Enghien, after leaving 500 men, as before directed, in Audenarde. Picton's

division quitted Brussels by the Charleroi road about two o'clock in the morning; and the Duke of Brunswick's corps somewhat later. Kruse's Nassau brigade received orders to follow along the same road, but having been dispersed in extended cantonments between Brussels and Louvain, it required some considerable time to collect together, and did not therefore reach Quatre-Bras sufficiently early to take part in the action. 16th of June.

The disposition made by Colonel the Prince Bernhard of Saxe Weimar at this point, on the night of the 15th, with the 2d brigade of Perponcher's Dutch-Belgian division, has already been described. At five o'clock in the morning Perponcher himself arrived there, and immediately commenced operations for recovering the ground lost on the previous evening. Two companies of the 2d battalion of the 2d regiment of Nassau, which had bivouacked in the wood of Bossu, were ordered to attack the French outposts, which they forced back as far as the heights of Frasne; but here they were brought to a stand by the enemy's supports. By this time, however, they were reinforced by the remainder of the battalion, and a constant skirmish was maintained until nearly mid-day, when the 2d battalion having exhausted its ammunition, was relieved by the 3d from Quatre-Bras, which was shortly afterwards joined by the 1st battalion of the same regiment. The skirmishing continued for a considerable time

16th of June. without any marked result in favour of either party.

Meanwhile the Prince of Orange, on passing through Nivelles, at six o'clock, had put the 1st brigade of Perponcher's division, under General Bylandt, in march upon Quatre-Bras, with the exception of the 7th Dutch line-battalion, which remained there until relieved by Alten's division about noon. Immediately upon Bylandt's reaching Quatre-Bras, two companies of the 27th battalion of Dutch light infantry were sent forward to occupy a commanding eminence, in support of the left of the line of skirmishers, and they successfully resisted several attempts on the part of the enemy to dislodge them. The Prince of Orange having now arrived, and brought forward fresh supports, he advanced the whole line until it had reached within less than a mile of Frasne.

Ney, having quitted Charleroi at a very early hour in the morning, returned to Gosselies, where he communicated with Reille, whom he ordered to assemble the force then with him, consisting of two infantry-divisions and their artillery, and to advance upon Frasne; to which point the Marshal repaired in person. Here he collected all the information which the generals and other officers had been able to obtain respecting the enemy; and being naturally anxious to make himself acquainted with the details of the force placed so suddenly under his orders, he desired Colonel

Heymès, his first aide-de-camp, to repair to every regiment, and note down its strength and the names of the commanding officers; after the performance of which duty, Colonel Heymès laid before the Marshal a return of the troops in the field. 16th of June.

The uncertainty in which Ney was placed as to the amount of force concentrated by the Allies during the night in rear of Quatre-Bras, and the conviction which he had reason to entertain that the Prussians were in strong force at no very great distance on his right, and that therefore any check experienced by the main column under Napoleon, would endanger his right flank and even his line of communication, rendered him cautious in attacking a point so considerably in advance of the Emperor's left, without ample means at hand to enable him, in case of disaster, to maintain that line, or, in the event of success, to effectually establish himself at Quatre-Bras, and derive every possible advantage from its possession, by checking, if not defeating in detail, any body of troops that might be approaching it as a point of concentration from either Nivelles or Brussels. Hence he became extremely anxious for the arrival of d'Erlon's corps and the promised 3d corps of heavy cavalry under Kellermann; the more so, as although Lefebvre-Desnouette's light cavalry of the guard was nearer at hand, he had been desired by Napoleon not to make use of it. Officers of the chasseurs

16th of June.

and lancers of the guard (in consequence of the deficiency of staff-officers) were sent to the rear in the direction of Marchienne-au-Pont, with orders to hasten the march of the 1st corps upon Frasne; while Ney himself was busily occupied in reconnoitring the enemy's position and movements.

Whilst so employed, a despatch reached him from the Emperor,* acquainting him that he had just ordered Kellermann's dragoons to march to Gosselies, where they would be at his disposal; stating, at the same time, his intention to withdraw Lefebvre-Desnouette's light cavalry of the guard from the force under his command; and expressing a wish to be informed of the exact disposition of the 1st and 2d corps, and of the cavalry-divisions attached to them, as also of the probable strength of the enemy, and of the particulars which had been obtained concerning him.

Between eleven and twelve o'clock the Duke of Wellington arrived in person at Quatre-Bras. He reconnoitred the position of the enemy, and conceiving that the latter was not in any great force at Frasne, while at the same time, accounts reached him that Prince Blücher, in his position at Ligny, was menaced by the advance of considerable masses, he shortly afterwards rode off to hold a conference with the Prussian commander, whom he found at the windmill of Bussy, between Ligny

* Appendix XVI.

and Bry; whence he had an opportunity of observing the French preparatory dispositions for attack. These having led the Duke to conclude that Napoleon was bringing the main force of his army to bear against Blücher, he at once proposed to assist the Prince by first advancing straight upon Frasne and Gosselies, as soon as he should have concentrated sufficient force, and then operating upon the enemy's left and rear, which would afford a powerful diversion in favour of the Prussians, from the circumstance that their right wing was the weakest and most exposed, and considering the object of Napoleon's movements, the one most likely to be attacked. Upon a calculation being made, however, of the time which would elapse ere the Duke would be able to collect the requisite force for undertaking this operation, and of the possibility of Blücher being defeated before it could be carried into effect, it was considered preferable that Wellington should, if possible, move to the support of the Prussian right by the Namur road. A direct support of this kind, however, was necessarily contingent on circumstances, and subject to the Duke's discretion. The latter having expressed his confident expectation of being enabled to afford the desired support, as also of his succeeding in concentrating very shortly, a sufficient force to assume the offensive, rode back to Quatre-Bras. 16th of June.

It was nearly eleven o'clock when General

16th of June. Flahaut, an aide-de-camp of the Emperor, after passing through Gosselies, arrived at Frasne, with the following letter from the latter to the Marshal:

"Au Maréchal Ney.

"Mon Cousin—Je vous envoie mon aide-de-camp, le Général Flahaut, qui vous porte la présente lettre. Le major-général a dû vous donner des ordres; mais vous recevrez les miens plus tôt, parceque mes officiers vont plus vite que les siens. Vous recevrez l'ordre du mouvement du jour, mais je veux vous en écrire en détail, parceque c'est de la plus haute importance. Je porte le Maréchal Grouchy avec les 3^{e} et 4^{e} corps d'infanterie sur Sombref. Je porte ma garde à Fleurus, et j'y serai de ma personne avant midi. J'y attaquerai l'ennemi si je le rencontre, et j'éclairerai la route jusqu'à Gembloux. Là d'après ce qui se passera, je prendrai mon parti peut-être à trois heures après midi, peut-être ce soir. Mon intention est que, immédiatement après que j'aurai pris mon parti, vous soyez prêt à marcher sur Bruxelles, je vous appuierai avec la garde qui sera à Fleurus ou à Sombref, et je désirerais arriver à Bruxelles demain matin. Vous vous mettriez en marche ce soir même si je prends mon parti d'assez bonne heure pour que vous puissiez en être informé de jour et faire ce soir trois ou quatre lieues et être demain à sept heures du matin à Bruxelles. Vous pouvez donc disposer vos troupes de la manière suivante:—Première division à deux lieues en avant des Quatre-Chemins s'il n'y a pas d'inconvénient. Six divisions d'infanterie autour des Quatre-Chemins, et une division à Marbais, afin que je puisse l'attirer à moi à Sombref, si j'en avais besoin. Elle ne retarderait d'ailleurs pas votre marche. Le corps du Comte de Valmy, qui a 3,000 cuirassiers d'élite à l'intersection du chemin des Romains et de celui de Bruxelles, afin que je puisse l'attirer à moi, si j'en avais besoin; aussitot que mon parti sera pris, vous lui enverrez l'ordre de venir vous rejoindre. Je désirerais avoir avec moi la division de la garde que commande le Général Lefebvre-Desnouettes, et je vous envoie

les deux divisions du corps du Comte de Valmy pour la remplacer. Mais dans mon projet actuel, je préfère placer le Comte de Valmy de manière à le rappeler si j'en avais besoin, et ne point faire de fausses marches au Général Lefebvre-Desnouettes, puisqu'il est probable que je me déciderai ce soir à marcher sur Bruxelles avec la garde. Cependant, couvrez la division Lefebvre par les deux divisions de cavalrie d'Erlon et de Reille, afin de ménager la garde, et que, s'il y avait quelque échauffourée avec les Anglais, il est préférable que ce soit sur la ligne que sur la garde. J'ai adopté comme principe général pendant cette campagne, de diviser mon armée en deux ailes et une réserve. Votre aile sera composée des quatre divisions du 2e corps, de deux divisions de cavalerie légère, et de deux divisions du corps de Valmy. Cela ne doit pas être loin de 45 à 50 mille hommes. 16th of June.

Le Maréchal Grouchy aura à peu près la même force, et commandera l'aile droite. La garde formera la réserve, et je me porterai sur l'une ou l'autre aile, selon les circonstances. Le major-général donne les ordres les plus précis pour qu'il n'y ait aucune difficulté sur l'obéissance à vos ordres lorsque vous serez détaché, les commandants de corps devant prendre mes ordres directement quand je me trouve présent. Selon les circonstances, j'affaiblirai l'une ou l'autre aile en augmentant ma réserve. Vous sentez assez l'importance attachée à la prise de Bruxelles. Cela pourra d'ailleurs donner lieu à des accidents, car un mouvement aussi prompt et aussi brusque isolera l'armée Anglaise de Mons, Ostende, etc. Je désire que vos dispositions soient bien faites pour qu'au premier ordre, vos huit divisions puissent marcher rapidement, et sans obstacle sur Bruxelles.

N.

"Charleroi, le 16 Juin, 1815."

This letter, which was intended to convey to Ney a general notion of Napoleon's intentions, prescribed to him, at the same time, as a principle, that he was to consider his movements subordinate

16th of June. to those of the Emperor. The latter intimated his purpose of attacking the enemy at Fleurus, should he find him there, and of pushing on as far as Gembloux, where he would decide upon his plan of further operation, "perhaps at three o'clock in the afternoon, perhaps in the evening;" immediately *after* which Ney was to be ready to march upon Brussels, supported by Napoleon with the guards, it being the Emperor's desire to reach that capital in the morning. The idea of advancing upon Gembloux, and of capturing Brussels by a *coup de main*, which could only be effected by a vigorous repulse and signal defeat of the corps of Zieten, and by a successful turning and partial dispersion of those of Pirch and Thielemann, as also by the rapid march of a closely collected force under Ney, proves that Napoleon had either been insufficiently informed as to the general dispositions of his opponents, or had greatly miscalculated the degree of energy and promptitude required in his movements for the execution of such a design.

Very shortly afterwards, Ney received the official order of movement* to which Napoleon adverted in his letter as having been sent by Soult. It instructed him to put the 2nd and 1st corps d'armée, as also the 3rd corps of cavalry which had been placed at his disposal, in movement upon Quatre-

* Appendix XVII.

Bras; to take up a position at that point; thence to push forward reconnaissances as far as possible on the roads to Brussels and Nivelles, "d'où probablement l'ennemi s'est retiré;" to establish, should he meet with no impediment, a division with some cavalry at Genappe; and to detach another division towards Marbais, in order to cover the interval between Sombref and Quatre-Bras. He was also to desire the general officers commanding the two corps d'armée to assemble their troops, collect the stragglers, and order up all the waggons belonging to the artillery and to the hospitals that might still be in the rear. 16th of June.

In pursuance of these instructions, Ney despatched orders of movement to Counts Reille and d'Erlon. The former was desired* to put the 2d corps immediately on the march, for the purpose of taking up the following position:—the 5th division in rear of Genappe, upon the heights which command that town, the left appuied upon the high road; one or two battalions covering all the débouchés in advance on the Brussels road; the 9th division, following the movement of the 5th, to take up a position in second line on the heights to the right and left of the village of Bauterlet; the 6th and 7th divisions at Quatre-Bras. It was at the same time intimated to Reille that the three first divisions of d'Erlon's corps were to take post at

* Appendix XVIII.

16th of June. Frasne; the right division to establish itself at Marbais along with Piré's division of light cavalry; that the former was to cover his (Reille's) march towards Brussels, and both his flanks; that two divisions of Kellermann's corps were to take post at Frasne and Liberchies; and that the regiments of the guard under Generals Lefebvre-Desnouettes and Colbert were to remain in their actual position at Frasne.

This order had scarcely been sent off to Reille when Ney received from the latter a despatch, dated Gosselies, 16th June, a quarter past ten, a.m.,* announcing his having just received from Girard (whose division was still at Heppignies,) a verbal report by one of his officers, to the effect that the enemy continued to occupy Fleurus with light cavalry; that hostile masses were observed advancing along the Namur road, the heads of their columns reaching as far as St. Amand; that these troops were gradually forming, and gaining ground; that as far as could be judged at that distance, the columns appeared to consist of six battalions each; and that movements of additional troops were perceived in their rear. Reille added that General Flahaut, in passing through Gosselies, had made him acquainted with the purport of the orders he was conveying to the Marshal, whereupon he had communicated with Count

* Appendix XIX.

d'Erlon, in order that the latter might follow the movement which he (Reille) had intended to commence as soon as the divisions were under arms, but that in consequence of this report from Girard he would wait for the Marshal's further instructions, holding the troops ready to march. 16th of June.

About the same time, orders reached Ney from Napoleon,* desiring him to unite the corps under Reille and d'Erlon, and the cavalry-corps under Kellermann, which latter, it was stated, was on the point of commencing its march towards him; remarking also, that with these troops he ought to be able to destroy whatever forces the enemy might bring forward; that Grouchy was going to advance upon Sombref; and that the Emperor was setting off for Fleurus, to which place the Marshal was to address his reports.

In consequence of these instructions, Ney became anxious for the speedy concentration of his troops, and again sent orders to Reille and d'Erlon to move up their divisions. The information which he had obtained concerning the enemy in his front, and Girard's report of the assembling of troops in front of Fleurus, induced him to be cautious in his proceedings, and not to attempt any impetuous onset until he could have all his force more in hand, instead of the greater portion of it being, as it then was, lengthened out in columns of route

* Appendix XX.

16th of June. along the Charleroi high road; and, in this respect, his views were in perfect accordance with the last despatch which he had received from the Emperor, enjoining him, in the first instance, to unite the two corps of Reille and d'Erlon. Hence, in debouching from his position at Frasne, about one o'clock, his advance was by no means vigorous: it was limited to a gradual pressing forward of the light troops, and amounted to little more than a reconnaissance.

In the mean time, the Prince of Orange made his dispositions for impeding, as much as possible, the French attack, and maintaining his ground in front of Quatre-Bras, until the arrival of the reinforcements, which, he knew, were rapidly approaching from Brussels and Nivelles. Upon the high road, in advance of his centre, and in front of Frasne, he placed two guns and a howitzer of Perponcher's divisional horse-artillery; another gun and a howitzer more to the right, and the remaining three guns of this battery in reserve, on the Namur road. He also placed four guns and both howitzers of the divisional foot-artillery in second line, in advance of Quatre-Bras, and the remaining two guns of this battery on the right wing of his first line. Detachments were also sent to strengthen the left wing, and the wood of Delhutte was occupied by skirmishers.

About two o'clock, Ney, calculating that d'Erlon's corps could not be far in his rear, and hoping

that the sound of his cannonade would hasten its march, resolved to attack the enemy's forces which intercepted his advance upon Quatre-Bras. Piré's light cavalry, constituting a strong line of skirmishers with well-disposed supports, covered the advance of the infantry-divisions of Bachelu and Foy, whilst that of Jerome followed as a reserve. 16th of June.

The force with which Ney thus entered the field, consisted of 3 divisions of Reille's corps, of Piré's light cavalry, of 4 batteries of foot, and 1 of horse, artillery: altogether—

15,750 infantry
1,865 cavalry
38 guns.

The Prince of Orange's force consisted of De Perponcher's division (with the exception of the 7th Dutch line-battalion); of 1 battery of foot, and 1 of horse, artillery: altogether—

6,832 infantry
16 guns.

The Dutch-Belgian troops gradually retired as the French advanced, but the Prince, aware of the great advantages which the position of Quatre-Bras would derive from the possession of the farm of Gemioncourt, adjoining the Charleroi road, as also of the wood of Bossu on the right, and of the inclosures of Piermont on the left, flank, endeavoured, with that view, to make a stand, as soon as his centre reached the first-named point. The 5th battalion of Dutch militia which occupied this post, successfully withstood several attacks, during

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16th of June.

which Ney drew up his forces along the ridge which, intersecting the high road in the immediate (French) rear of Gemioncourt, extends on one side towards the wood of Bossu, and on the other in the direction of Piermont.

The vast preponderance of force on the part of the French, was now quite manifest to the Prince of Orange, who found himself compelled to withdraw the main body of his troops into the wood of Bossu, still retaining, however, the post of Gemioncourt. The French pressed forward with their light troops; and part of Piré's light cavalry seizing a favourable opportunity, gallantly charged the 27th Dutch light infantry, threw it into confusion, and made many prisoners. At the same time a portion of Bachelu's infantry-division on the right advanced towards the village of Piermont.

It was about half-past two, or perhaps a quarter before three o'clock, when the Prince of Orange, whose situation had become extremely critical, as he directed his anxious looks towards that point of the horizon which was bounded by the elevated ground about Quatre-Bras, had the inexpressible satisfaction of recognising, by their deep red masses, the arrival of British troops upon the field.

These comprised the 5th infantry-division, commanded by Lieut. General Sir Thomas Picton,*

* These troops had been halted at Waterloo, both for the purpose of resting, and of awaiting further orders, so that they might be moved upon either Nivelles or Quatre-Bras, (the roads to which points unite at Mont

and consisting of the 8th British brigade, under Major General Sir James Kempt,* the 9th British brigade, under Major General Sir Denis Pack,† and of the 4th Hanoverian brigade,‡ under Colonel Best.§ The head of the column, leaving Quatre-Bras on its right, turned down the Namur road, along which the division was speedily drawn up; the British brigades in front, and the Hanoverian brigade in second, line. Captain von Rettberg's‖ battery of Hanoverian foot artillery took post on the right, and Major Rogers's¶ battery of British foot artillery on the left of the division. The 1st battalion of the 95th British regiment, commanded by Colonel Sir Andrew Barnard,** was despatched in haste towards the village of Piermont, of which it was to endeavour to gain possession. 16th of June.

St. Jean,) according as the Duke might think proper to direct, on his becoming acquainted with the exact state of affairs. They were soon joined by the Brunswick troops, which, after a short rest, proceeded on to Genappe, where they again halted. About twelve o'clock an order reached Picton for the continuation of the march of his division upon Quatre-Bras. Proceeding through Genappe, it passed the Brunswickers, who soon followed along the same road.

* Now General the Right Honourable Sir James Kempt, G.C.B.; G.C.H.

† Major General Sir Denis Pack, K.C.B., died on the 24th of July, 1823.

‡ The 5th Hanoverian brigade, under Colonel Vincke, properly belonged to the 5th division, but in consequence of some mistake in the disposition of the troops, Colonel Best's brigade held the place of the former in this division both at Quatre-Bras and at Waterloo.

§ Major General Best, K.C.H., (Lieut. Colonel in the British service,) died on the 5th of December, 1836.

‖ Now Captain von Rettberg (Colonel in the Hanoverian artillery).

¶ Colonel Rogers, C.B., died on the 9th of August, 1839.

** Now Lieut. General Sir Andrew Barnard, G.C.B.; G.C.H.

16th of June.

The French, on perceiving the arrival of the British infantry, opened a furious cannonade from their batteries, with a view to disturb its formation, while Ney, anxious to secure the vantage-ground of a field which he plainly foresaw, was likely to become the scene of a severe contest, renewed his attack upon Gemioncourt, still bravely defended by the 5th Dutch militia. Hereupon, Perponcher, having received an order to advance this battalion along the high road, immediately placed himself at its head, as did also the Prince of Orange himself, who rode up to it at the same moment; but it soon became exposed to a most destructive fire of artillery, from which it suffered an immense loss, while the French infantry succeeded in obtaining possession of the farm, in which they firmly established themselves.

The Duke of Wellington, who had returned to Quatre-Bras from the Prussian position, shortly before the arrival of Picton's division, was so much alive to the importance of maintaining Gemioncourt and its inclosures, that he gave directions for its immediate occupation by a British regiment, but the one destined for this service having by some accident been otherwise disposed of, some delay occurred, and the 28th British regiment, commanded by Colonel Sir Charles Philip Belson,* was then marched down towards

* Major General Sir Charles Philip Belson, K.C.B., died in November, 1830.

that point, under the guidance of Lieut. Colonel Gomm,* on the staff of the 5th division. As the battalion approached the farm, the latter was discovered to be already occupied by the French, whereupon it was withdrawn to its division. 16th of June.

The 3d Dutch-Belgian light cavalry-brigade, under General Van Merle, had shortly before this reached the field, and now advanced to the support of the Dutch infantry retiring from Gemioncourt, but they were met and defeated by Piré's cavalry, and pursued along the high road nearly to Quatre-Bras, where they arrived in great disorder, a portion of them coming in contact with the Duke of Wellington himself, and carrying his Grace along with them to the rear of Quatre-Bras. The latter, however, succeeded in arresting their further flight, and in bringing them again to the front. The French cavalry did not, on this occasion, follow up the pursuit, evidently hesitating to approach very near to the allied infantry, the latter appearing well-formed, and fully prepared to receive them. The Dutch-Belgian infantry retreated to the wood of Bossu, abandoning the three guns to the enemy, who closely pursued them, and now began to penetrate into the wood.

Meanwhile, Bachelu, on the French right, threw a considerable force into Piermont, in sufficient

* Now Lieut. General Sir William Gomm, K.C.B.

16th of June. time to secure its possession before the 1st battalion 95th British regiment had approached the village, and was pushing forward another strong body towards a small wood that lay still more in advance, on the opposite side of the Namur high road, the possession of which along with that of Piermont would have effectually cut off the direct communication between Quatre-Bras and Ligny. Here, for the first time in this campaign, the troops of the two nations became engaged. The skirmishers who successfully checked the further advance of the French, and secured the wood, were the 1st battalion of the British 95th rifles,* whom the old campaigners of the French army, at least those who had served in the Peninsula, had so frequently found the foremost in the fight, and of whose peculiarly effective discipline and admirable training they had had ample experience.

The possession of Gemioncourt proved of the utmost importance to Ney's position, which now assumed a definite character, and, in a purely tactical point of view, offered great advantages. The southern portion of the wood of Bossu was occupied by his extreme left, while his extreme right was in full possession of Piermont; and these points were connected by a narrow valley extending along his whole front, bounded on either side by a hedge-row, and intersecting the Charleroi

* Now the rifle brigade.

road close to Gemioncourt. The outer fence was strongly occupied by his light troops, ready to cover the formation and advance of his columns of attack, for the support of which by artillery, the heights constituting his main position in rear of Gemioncourt, offered every facility. 16th of June.

Scarcely had Picton's division taken up its ground, when the Duke of Brunswick's corps arrived upon the field. It was not complete; its artillery (under Major Mahn) and the 1st and 3d light battalions (commanded by Major von Holstein and Major Ebeling,) having been stationed in distant cantonments, had not yet joined. The 2d light battalion (under Major von Brandenstein) was immediately detached to the wood near Piermont on the left of the position, and of which the possession had already been secured by the 1st battalion of the British 95th regiment: the two rifle companies of the advanced-guard-battalion (under Major von Rauschenplatt) were moved into the wood of Bossu; on the right of which some detachments of cavalry were posted for the purpose of observing the enemy's dispositions in that quarter. The remainder of these troops, by a movement to their left, when close upon Quatre-Bras, deployed in rear of, and in a direction parallel to, the Namur road, thus forming a reserve to Picton's division. The absent portion of the corps reached the field in the course of the action, as will hereafter be explained.

16th of June.

The Duke of Wellington's force in the field at this moment was as follows:—

		Infantry.	Cavalry.	Guns.
British	8th infantry brigade	2,471		
	9th do. do.	2,173		
K. G. Legion	Battery of foot artillery			6
Hanoverians	4th infantry brigade	2,582		
	Battery of foot artillery			6
Brunswickers	Advanced-guard-battalion	672		
	2 battalions of the light infantry brigade	1,344		
	Line infantry brigade	2,016		
	Regiment of Hussars		690	
	Squadron of lancers		232	
Dutch-Belgians	2nd infantry division*	6,832		
	3rd cavalry brigade		1,082	
	Battery of foot artillery			8
	Do. horse do.			8
		18,090	2,004	28

The following is the amount of force which Marshal Ney had actually in the field:—

	Infantry.	Cavalry.	Guns.
5th infantry division	3,833		
6th do. do.	7,429		
9th do. do.	4,488		
3 divisional foot batteries			24
1 reserve foot battery			8
2nd cavalry division		1,865	
1 battery of horse artillery			6
	15,750	1,865	38

The cannonade which had opened against the 5th British division as it took up its ground, continued with unabated vigour. The French light troops were now observed advancing from the

* Deducting the 7th Dutch line-battalion—See page 90.

inclosures that skirted the foot of their position, and to meet them the light companies of the different regiments of Picton's division were immediately thrown forward. On the French extreme right all further progress was checked by the gallant manner in which the 1st battalion 95th British regiment, though opposed by a much superior force, retained possession of the Namur road, which they lined with their skirmishers, while the wood in rear was occupied by the battalion-reserve and the 2d Brunswick light battalion. On the French left, however, the incessant rattle of musketry in the wood of Bossu plainly indicated by its gradual approach in the direction of Quatre-Bras, that the Dutch-Belgian infantry, notwithstanding their vast superiority in numbers, were yielding to the fierce onset of the enemy in that quarter. 16th of June.

The protection which the French would derive from the possession of the eastern portion of this wood for the advance of their masses over the space between it and the Charleroi road, instantly became apparent to the British commander; in fact, the previous pursuit of the Dutch-Belgian cavalry along this road proved the expediency of establishing some restraint to such facility for a hostile advance in that direction; and he therefore requested the Duke of Brunswick to take up a position with a part of his corps between Quatre-Bras and Gemioncourt, so as to have his left resting upon the

16th of June.

road, and his right communicating with Perponcher's division, part of which was deployed along the skirt of the wood. The Duke of Brunswick immediately ordered forward the guard-battalion, (under Major von Pröstler,) the 1st line-battalion, (under Major Metzner,) and the two light companies of the advanced-guard-battalion, which he posted in close columns upon, and contiguous to, the road, on the ground indicated, and threw out a line of skirmishers connecting these columns with the two jäger-companies in the wood. As an immediate support to the infantry, he stationed the Brunswick hussars (under Major von Cramm) and lancers (under Major Pott) in a hollow in their rear; while, as a reserve to the whole, the 2nd and 3rd line-battalions (under Major von Strombeck and Major von Norrmann) were posted *en crémaillère* contiguously to the houses of Quatre-Bras, which important point they were to defend to the last extremity.

Whilst this disposition on the Anglo-allied right was in progress, two heavy French columns were observed descending into the valley below Gemioncourt, where, under cover of the strong line of skirmishers which had been for some time engaged with those of Picton's division, they were divided into separate smaller columns of attack. The cannonade from the French heights, which now sensibly quickened, was telling fearfully amidst the 5th British division; and a fresh impulse having been

given to the enemy's light troops by the near approach of their own attacking columns, the British skirmishers, overpowered by numbers only, were seen darting, alternately and at short distances, to the rear, through the line of smoke that had been raised midway between the contending armies. At this critical moment, when the rapid progress of the French in the wood of Bossu, and their imposing advance against his left wing, threatened to compromise his disposal of the Brunswick troops on the right of the Charleroi road, Wellington, by one of those electric inspirations of his master-mind, with which he had been wont in former campaigns to frustrate the best-devised plans of his opponents, resolved not to await the attack, but to meet it. He instantly ordered the advance of Kempt's and Pack's brigades, with the exception of the 92nd regiment, which (under the command of Lieut. Colonel Cameron*) was to continue at its post on the Namur road, close to Quatre-Bras. 16th of June.

During the advance of these two brigades, which was made with admirable steadiness and in the best order, the skirmishers fell back upon their respective battalions, all of which now presented a clear front to the enemy. From the heads of Ney's columns, as well as from the thick lines of skirmishers by which they were connected, a severe and destructive fire was opened and maintained

* Lieut. Colonel John Cameron was killed in this battle.

16th of June. against the British line, along which the gallant Picton, the far-famed leader of the no less renowned "fighting-division" of the British army in the Peninsular campaigns, was seen galloping from one regiment to another, encouraging his men, and inciting them by his presence and example. The troops significantly responded to his call by those loud and animating shouts with which British soldiers are wont to denote their eagerness to close with their enemies. The interval between the adverse lines was rapidly diminishing: the fire from the French suddenly began to slacken; hesitation, quickly succeeded by disorder, became apparent in their ranks; and then it was, that, animating each other with redoubled cheers, the British regiments were seen to lower their bristling bayonets, and, driving every thing before them, to pursue their opponents down to the outer fence of the valley, whence the French line had advanced in the full confidence of triumph.

Kempt's brigade, in consequence of the greater proximity of its original position to that of the enemy, was the first to overthrow the French infantry. The 79th Highlanders, on the left of the line, (commanded by Lieut. Colonel Douglas*) made a gallant charge down the hill, dashed through the first fence, and pursued their opponents, who had advanced in two battalion-columns, not only

* Now Major General Sir Neil Douglas, K.C.B., K.C.H.

across the valley, but through the second fence; and, carried on by their ardour, even ventured to ascend the enemy's position. By this time, however, their ranks were much broken: they were speedily recalled, and as they retraced their steps across the valley, they derived considerable support from the adjoining battalion in the line, the 32nd regiment, (commanded by Lieut. Colonel Maitland,*) which was keeping up from the first hedge a vigorous fire against the French, who now lined the second fence. The remaining regiments of both brigades had all in like manner charged down as far as the nearest hedge, whence they inflicted a severe loss upon their enemies as these precipitately retired, with their ranks completely broken and disordered on passing through the inclosure. On the right of the line, the 42nd Highlanders (commanded by Lieut. Colonel Sir Robert Macara,†) and 44th regiment (commanded by Lieut. Colonel Hamerton,‡) had advanced to within a very short distance of Gemioncourt, in which, and behind the hedges lining the valley, the French were seeking shelter. 16th of June.

During the progress of this contest on the Anglo-allied left of the Charleroi road, the Brunswick troops were not permitted to remain in quiet possession of their advanced position on the right,

* Colonel James Maitland died on the 6th September, 1826.

† Lieut. Colonel Sir Robert Macara, K.C.B., was killed in this battle.

‡ Now Major General Hamerton, C.B.

16th of June. which indeed was well calculated to attract Ney's attention. A battery was immediately drawn up on the opposite height westward of Gemioncourt, from which, as also from the incessant fire maintained by the enemy's skirmishers posted at no great distance from the front of the line, a very destructive fire was maintained against the Brunswick troops. The regiment of hussars particularly suffered, standing in line, and frequently receiving an entire discharge from the battery. The Brunswickers were, for the most part, young and inexperienced soldiers—in every sense of the word, *raw* troops: and the numerous casualties which befel their ranks in this exposed situation might have produced a fatal influence upon their discipline, but for the noble example of their Prince, whose admirable tact and calm demeanour were most conspicuous on this trying occasion. Quietly smoking his pipe in front of his line, he gave out his orders as if at a mere field-day; and was only restrained from taking offence at the representations made to him by some of his staff of the imminent danger to which he was exposing himself, from a consciousness of the kindly motives by which they were dictated.

At length, the continued havoc created amongst his devoted followers by the fire from the French heights, excited the impatience of the Duke himself for at least the means of retaliation; and as his own artillery was still upon the march from its

cantonments, he sent to the Duke of Wellington a request to be furnished with some pieces of cannon. This was immediately acceded to, and four guns were moved forward and posted on the right of the Brunswick infantry; but they had scarcely fired a few rounds when the enemy's cannonade was redoubled; two of the guns were quickly disabled, and several of the horses attached to the limbers were killed. At the same time, two columns of French infantry were seen advancing in succession along the edge of the wood of Bossu, preceded by a battalion in line, and supported by some cavalry, of which description of force there also appeared a considerable mass advancing along the Charleroi road. As the French infantry rapidly approached the right of the line of Brunswick skirmishers, the latter were forced to retire, as were also the Dutch-Belgian infantry that lined the wood at this part of the field. The Duke of Brunswick, perceiving that the bend of the wood in rear of his regiment of hussars was likely to impede the freedom of its movements, immediately ordered it to proceed to the opposite side of the Charleroi road, and retire towards Quatre-Bras, there to remain in readiness to act according to circumstances. Then, placing himself at the head of his lancers, he gallantly charged the advancing infantry, which, however, received them with so much steadiness and good order, and opened upon them so destructive a fire, that the attack com-

16th of June.

16th of June. pletely failed, and the regiment withdrew to the rear of Quatre-Bras. Finding the strength of the enemy's forces to be so overpowering, the Duke now ordered the infantry posted contiguously to the Charleroi road, also to retire upon the main position. The 1st line-battalion moved hastily along the road, while the guard-battalion, with which the Duke himself was at this time present, retired across the fields eastward of the isolated house upon the Charleroi road, towards the Allied line, posted upon the road to Namur. Major von Pröstler, who commanded the guard-battalion, rendered himself conspicuous by his exertions to execute this movement in as orderly a manner as possible, but the eager and close pursuit by the French light troops, now emboldened by success, a shower of round shot upon the column, and the approach of the enemy's cavalry, spread such a panic among these young troops that they fled in confusion, some through Quatre-Bras, and others through the Anglo-allied line on the left of that point; and it was in the moment of attempting to rally his soldiers, not far from the little garden of the house before mentioned, that the Duke of Brunswick was struck from his horse by a shot which terminated the career of this gallant prince.*

* No officer of his staff was with him at the moment except Major von Wachholtz, who immediately caused him to be removed across the road to the rear of the line by some men of the guard-battalion. Here, several officers searched in vain for a surgeon; not one could be found: while the deadly paleness of his countenance and his half-closed eyes

BRUNSWICK

16th of June.

In the mean time the Brunswick hussars were ordered forward to cover the retreat of the infantry, and repel the advance of the French cavalry, which was now seen in rapid motion along the Charleroi road, as if incited and emboldened by the loud shouts of triumph sent forth by their light troops in front. The hussars, whose order while advancing, was quickly disturbed by a straggling fire from the French infantry, to which their right flank became exposed, failed in producing the slightest check upon the cavalry, and were soon seen wheeling about and in full flight, closely pursued by their opponents.

To the 42nd Highlanders and 44th British regiment, which were posted on a reverse slope, and in line, close upon the left of the above road, the advance of French cavalry was so sudden and unexpected, the more so as the Brunswickers had just moved on to the front, that as both these bodies whirled past them to the rear, in such close

betokened the worst. Once he looked up, recognised his attendants, and asked for Colonel Olfermann, the next in command. He then requested some water, which, however, could not be procured at the moment. As the proximity of the fight increased, fears were entertained of his falling into the hands of the enemy in the event of a retreat, and he was therefore carried still further to the rear, along the Charleroi road, as far as the group of houses called La Baraque. Here they found the staff-surgeon of the corps, Dr. Pockels, who, having examined the wound, declared the Prince to have breathed his last. The fatal shot appeared to have been a musket-ball which entered his right wrist and passed diagonally through his body. Thus fell in the battle-field—the bed of glory in which reposed so many of his illustrious house—Frederick William, Duke of Brunswick, in the fourty-fourth year of his age.

16th of June. proximity to each other, they were, for the moment, considered to consist of one mass of Allied cavalry. Some of the old soldiers of both regiments were not so easily satisfied on this point, and immediately opened a partial fire obliquely upon the French lancers, which, however, Sir Denis Pack and their own officers endeavoured as much as possible to restrain; but no sooner had the latter succeeded in causing a cessation of the fire, than the lancers, which were the rearmost of the cavalry, wheeled sharply round, and advanced in admirable order directly upon the rear of the two British regiments. The 42nd Highlanders having, from their position, been the first to recognise them as a part of the enemy's forces, rapidly formed square; but just as the two flank companies were running in to form the rear face, the lancers had reached the regiment, when a considerable portion of their leading division penetrated the square, carrying along with them, by the impetus of their charge, several men of those two companies, and creating a momentary confusion. The long-tried discipline and steadiness of the Highlanders, however, did not forsake them at this most critical juncture: these lancers, instead of effecting the destruction of the square, were themselves fairly hemmed into it, and either bayoneted or taken prisoners, whilst the endangered face, restored as if by magic, successfully repelled all further attempts on the part of the French to complete their expected triumph.

Their commanding officer, Lieut. Colonel Sir Robert Macara, was killed on this occasion, a lance having pierced through his chin until it reached the brain; and within the brief space of a few minutes, the command of the regiment devolved upon three other officers in succession: Lieut. Colonel Dick,* who was severely wounded, Brevet Major Davidson, who was mortally wounded, and Brevet Major Campbell,† who commanded it during the remainder of the campaign. 16th of June.

If this cavalry-attack had fallen so unexpectedly upon the 42nd Highlanders, still less had it been anticipated by the 44th regiment. Lieut. Colonel Hamerton, perceiving that the lancers were rapidly advancing against his rear, and that any attempt to form square would be attended with imminent danger, instantly decided upon receiving them in line. The low thundering sound of their approach was heard by his men before a conviction they were French flashed across the minds of any but the *old* soldiers who had previously fired at them as they passed their flank. Hamerton's words of command were, "Rear rank, right about face!"—"Make ready!"—(a short pause to admit of the still nearer approach of the cavalry,)—"Present!"—"Fire!" The effect produced by this volley was astonishing. The men, aware of their perilous

* Now Major General Sir Robert Dick, K.C.B.; K.C.H.

† Colonel John Campbell, C.B. died on the 31st March, 1841.

16th of June. position, doubtless took a most deliberate aim at their opponents, who were thrown into great confusion. Some few daring fellows made a dash at the centre of the battalion, hoping to capture the colours, in their apparently exposed situation; but the attempt, though gallantly made, was as gallantly defeated. The lancers now commenced a flight towards the French position by the flanks of the 44th. As they rushed past the left flank, the officer commanding the light company, who had very judiciously restrained his men from joining in the volley given to the rear, opened upon them a scattering fire; and no sooner did the lancers appear in the proper front of the regiment, when the front rank began in its turn to contribute to their overthrow and destruction.

Never, perhaps, did British infantry display its characteristic coolness and steadiness more eminently than on this trying occasion. To have stood in a thin two-deep line, awaiting, and prepared to receive, the onset of hostile cavalry, would have been looked upon at least as a most hazardous experiment; but, with its rear so suddenly menaced, and its flanks unsupported, to have instantly faced only one rank about, to have stood as if rooted to the ground, to have repulsed its assailants with so steady and well-directed a fire that numbers of them were destroyed—this was a feat of arms which the oldest, or best-disciplined corps in the world might have in vain hoped to accomplish;

yet most successfully and completely was this achieved by the gallant 2nd battalion of the 44th British regiment, under its brave commander, Lieut. Colonel Hamerton. 16th of June.

In this attack occurred one of those incidents which, in daring, equal any of the feats of ancient chivalry; which make the wildest fables of the deeds of the knights of old appear almost possible; which cause the bearing of an individual to stand out, as it were, in relief amidst the operations of the masses; and which, by their characteristic recklessness, almost invariably insure at least a partial success. A French lancer gallantly charged at the colours, and severely wounded Ensign Christie,* who carried one of them, by a thrust of his lance, which, entering the left eye, penetrated to the lower jaw. The Frenchman then endeavoured to seize the standard, but the brave Christie, notwithstanding the agony of his wound, with a presence of mind almost unequalled, flung himself upon it—not to save himself, but to preserve the honour of his regiment. As the colour fluttered in its fall, the Frenchman tore off a portion of the silk with the point of his lance; but he was not permitted to bear the fragment beyond the

* I have failed in my endeavours to trace the subsequent career of this officer. He was a lieutenant on half-pay of the 44th regiment, on the 24th of June, 1827; but in consequence of his having ceased to receive or apply for any further issue of half-pay during more than four years from that date, he was struck off the half-pay list, in conformity with the usual practice in like cases.

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ranks. Both shot and bayoneted by the nearest of the soldiers of the 44th, he was borne to the earth, paying with the sacrifice of his life for his display of unavailing bravery.*

In the mean time the leading portion of Piré's light cavalry, from which the lancers that attacked the 42nd and 44th British regiments had been detached, as already described, continued its advance along the high road towards Quatre-Bras, driving in the Brunswick hussars, who were now galloping confusedly upon the 92nd Highlanders then lining the ditch of the Namur high road contiguous to Quatre-Bras. Pursued by the chasseurs à cheval, and finding no opening for their passage, they made for the right flank of the regiment;† and, as they were flying past, the grenadier-company was wheeled back upon the road so as to oppose a front at that point to the flank of the pursuing cavalry, upon which the Highlanders now poured a most destructive volley. The shock thus occasioned to the French cavalry

* The part of the colour thus torn off by the French lancer, is to this day in the possession of Major General O'Malley, C.B., then Lieut. Colonel of the 44th regiment, to the command of which he succeeded, on Lieut.-Colonel Hamerton being wounded at a later period of the battle. The colours themselves are in the safe keeping of the latter officer, whose decision, firmness, and bravery, on this occasion, well entitle him to the guardianship of these sacred and glorious relics of his gallant corps.

† The Duke, on this occasion, was very nearly overtaken by the French cavalry; and being obliged to gallop towards the 92nd Highlanders, he called out to the nearest men to lie down in the ditch, when he fairly leaped over them.

was immediately perceptible; but though thrown into confusion, the main body soon re-formed, and retired with much steadiness and regularity. The front of the column, however, impelled by the furious ardour with which it had advanced, or, perhaps, imagining itself still followed and supported by the main body, dashed in amongst the houses of Quatre-Bras, and even advanced to some distance beyond them, cutting down several stragglers whom they found there, principally belonging to the routed Brunswick infantry, as also groups of wounded. Many of them rushed through the large opening into the farm-yard of Quatre-Bras, which was situated immediately in rear of the right of the 92nd. A few daring fellows finding they had proceeded too far to be able to retire by the same direction in which they had advanced, wheeled round suddenly at the point where the high roads intersect each other, and galloped right through the grenadier-company of the Highlanders, shouting, and brandishing their swords, and receiving a fire from some of the rear rank of the regiment as they dashed along the road. None of them escaped: one, an officer of the chasseurs à cheval, had already reached the spot where the Duke of Wellington was at that moment stationed in rear of the Highlanders. Some of the men immediately turned round and fired: his horse was killed, and at the same moment a musket-ball passed through each foot

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of the gallant young officer.* Those of the French chasseurs who had entered the farm-yard, finding no other outlet, now began to gallop back, in small parties of two or three at a time, but few escaped the deadly fire of the Highlanders.

About this time Kellermann reached the field, with the 11th heavy cavalry-division under Lieut. General L'Heritier. This augmented Ney's forces to the following amount:

	Infantry.	Cavalry.	Guns.
Force already in the field . .	15,750	1,865	38
11th cavalry-division		1,900	
1 battery of horse artillery . .			6
	15,750	3,765	44

The French infantry upon the extreme left had by this time possessed themselves of the greater portion of the wood of Bossu, from the allied rear of which numerous groups of wounded and run-aways were now seen to emerge; indeed, it soon became evident that no dependance could be placed on the continued occupation of the wood by the Dutch-Belgian forces, and that the whole brunt of

* It may here be mentioned as one of the numerous instances of the extraordinary mutation of circumstances under which, among civilized nations, military men are frequently thrown together, that an officer of the 92nd Highlanders, present at this scene, (Lieutenant Winchester,* who was severely wounded at Waterloo,) was afterwards billeted along with this French officer (Monsieur Bourgoine) in the same house, for six months, at Brussels, at the expiration of which period, he proceeded with him to Paris, where he received great kindness and attention from him and his family.

* Now Lieut. Colonel Winchester, K.H.—retired on full pay, 1st Nov. 1842.

the battle would have to be borne by the British, Hanoverian, and Brunswick, forces. Upon the extreme French right, all attempts to turn the opposite flank of the Allies, were successfully checked by the steadiness and gallantry of the 95th British regiment, supported by the 2nd Brunswick light battalion. 16th of June.

Ney, although he had failed in his first general attack upon the Anglo-allied line, had fully ascertained that the raw troops of which the Dutch-Belgian and Brunswick cavalry in the field were composed, were totally incapable of competing with his own veteran warriors of that arm, and he therefore determined to take advantage of Kellermann's arrival for the execution of a vigorous cavalry attack. Retaining General Piquet's brigade in reserve, he combined, for this purpose, General Guyton's brigade, consisting of the 8th and 11th cuirassiers, with Piré's light cavalry-division; and also taking advantage of his greatly superior artillery-force, he caused the attack to be preceded and covered by a tremendous cannonade, occasioning great havoc in the ranks of the Anglo-allied infantry, the range for which the French gunners had by this time ascertained with fearful precision. It was not long before the British battalions most in advance were warned of the approach of hostile cavalry by the running in of their skirmishers; and scarcely had they formed their squares when the batteries respectively op-

16th of June. posed to them having ceased their fire, a rushing sound was heard through the tall corn, which, gradually bending, disclosed to their view the heads of the attacking columns; and now began a conflict wherein the cool and daring intrepidity with which British infantry are accustomed to defy the assaults of cavalry, was exemplified in a manner that will ever reflect honour and glory upon the regiments to whose lot it fell, on this memorable field, to assert and maintain their country's prowess. A rolling fire from the muskets of the 42nd Highlanders and 44th British regiment, given at a moment when the enemy's horsemen were almost close upon their bayonets, though most destructive in its effects upon their own immediate opponents, checked not the ardour and impetuosity of the general attack. These two diminutive squares, now completely surrounded by the French cavalry, seemed destined to become a sacrifice to the fury with which a rapid succession of attacks was made upon them; no sooner was one squadron hurled back in confusion, than another rushed impetuously forward upon the same face of a square, to experience a similar fate; and sometimes different faces were charged simultaneously. A strong body of cuirassiers now passed the right flank of the two regiments, along the high road, with an evident intention of making another attempt upon Quatre-Bras.

Picton, who had been watching with intense

anxiety the contest maintained by the 42d and 44th British regiments in their exposed situation, and who had become convinced of the utter hopelessness of obtaining any efficient support from the Allied cavalry then in the field, could no longer restrain his impatience to fly to the rescue of the devoted squares; and, as a substitute for cavalry, he decided upon immediately assailing that of the enemy with his own oft-tried infantry. With this view, he united the Royals (under Lieut. Colonel Colin Campbell*) and the 28th regiment, both of which corps were at that moment standing in column at quarter distance. Led on by both Picton and Kempt, the united column with loud shouts, boldly advanced into the midst of the enemy's cavalry: the whole extent of ground along its front appeared to swarm with lancers, chasseurs à cheval, and cuirassiers, a considerable portion of whom were now seen rapidly forming for an attack upon the column; but Picton, constantly on the alert, and at the same time desirous of arriving at such a distance as would enable him to present an efficient flank fire in support of the 44th regiment, continued advancing until the last moment, when he suddenly formed it into square. The repeated and furious charges which ensued, were invariably repulsed by the Royals and the 28th, with the utmost steadiness and consummate bravery; and

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* Lieut. Colonel Colin Campbell, C.B. died in March, 1833.

16th of June. although the lancers individually dashed forward and frequently wounded the men in the ranks, yet all endeavours to effect an opening, of which the succeeding squadron of attack might take advantage, completely failed. The ground on which the square stood was such that the surrounding remarkably tall rye concealed it in a great measure, in the first attacks, from the view of the French cavalry until the latter came quite close upon it; but to remedy this inconvenience, and to preserve the impetus of their charge, the lancers had frequently recourse to sending forward a daring individual to plant a lance in the earth at a very short distance from the bayonets, and they then charged upon the lance-flag as a mark of direction.

The advance of the Royals and the 28th had been almost immediately followed, under the same form, by that of the 32d regiment, which, having reached a convenient distance, halted, and formed square so as to support, at the same time, by a flank fire, the Royals and 28th, and the square of the 79th Highlanders, which latter regiment constituted a connecting link with the 95th British regiment upon the extreme left.

Upon the advance of the regiments belonging to Kempt's and Pack's British brigades, Best's Hanoverian brigade occupied the Namur road in their rear, along which the landwehr-battalions Lüneburg, Osterode, and Münden, (respectively com-

manded by Lieut. Colonel von Ramdohr, Major von Reden, and Major von Schmid,) were deployed, while the landwehr-battalion Verden, (under Major von der Decken,) also in line, was posted somewhat in advance. 16th of June.

In this position, Picton's division sustained repeated assaults of the French cavalry, which attacked the squares simultaneously, and in every direction: as a portion rushed upon one square, other squadrons passed on to assail the next; some parties, taking advantage of sinuosities of the ground, awaited, like birds of prey, the favourable moment for pouncing upon their victims; no sooner was one attacking squadron driven back and dispersed by a stream of musketry from the face of a square, than a fresh party would rush from its cover upon the same ranks, in the vain hope that the means of breaking its onset had been expended; but a reserved fire never failed to bring down upon it a similar fate. Viewed from a little distance, the British squares could at times be scarcely discerned amidst the surrounding cavalry; and as the latter was frequently observed flying back from sudden discharges of musketry, a spectator might easily have imagined the squares to be so many immense bombs, with every explosion scattering death and confusion among the masses who rushed so daringly into their fatal vicinity.

The French cavalry, by its repeated failures to make any impression on the British infantry by

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the manner in which it had passed through and through the intervals between the squares, and in which the charging squadrons when dispersed had got intermingled, was now in great disorder—lancers, chasseurs, and cuirassiers, were mixed together and crossing one another in every direction, seeking out their respective corps. To retire and re-form had therefore become with them an absolutely necessary measure; but this afforded no respite to the devoted squares, against which the batteries upon the French heights now played with terrific effect.

During the French attack of the British squares on the eastern side of the Charleroi road, a considerable body of cuirassiers advanced along the latter, with the evident design of making another attack upon the Anglo-allied centre at Quatre-Bras. The Belgian cavalry, which was again ordered forward, endeavoured to check this movement, but with no better effect than that which attended its former attempt; in fact, it retired sooner, charged and pursued by the cuirassiers, against whom a rapid fire was now opened from the 92d Highlanders, who still lined the ditch of the Namur road, close to Quatre-Bras, a fire so destructive in its effects that the steel-clad warriors were completely staggered, and the order of their advance so thoroughly shaken, that they were compelled to retire in confusion.

In addition to the furious cannonade to which

they were subjected, the foremost of Picton's British battalions, more especially the 42d and 44th regiments, were exposed to a rapid and destructive fire, which, as soon as the enemy's cavalry had been withdrawn, was opened upon them by the French troops advancing from the inclosures of Gemioncourt. To check this, skirmishers were thrown forward, but from the want of sufficient ammunition, they could reply but very feebly to the fire of their opponents, who, not suffering the same disadvantage, were picking them off as fast as they could load. Their line soon became fearfully thinned, and finally their ammunition was totally exhausted, to which circumstance the officer on whom the command of them had devolved (Lieutenant Riddock,* 44th regiment) called the attention of Sir Denis Pack, who ordered him to close his men to their centre and to join his own regiment. He had just executed the first part of the order, when the French cavalry having rallied and re-formed, renewed their attacks upon the British squares. Squadrons of cuirassiers and lancers, in their onward course, swept past Lieutenant Riddock and his party, while others intercepted his direct line of retreat. He instantly formed four deep, and with his front rank at the charge, he made good his way through the enemy's cavalry, as far as the south face of the

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* Now Lieutenant Riddock, on half-pay of the 44th regiment.

16th of June. square formed by the 44th regiment; which, however, was so hotly pressed at the moment as to be unable to receive him, whereupon he ordered his men to lie down close to the bayonets, until a favourable opportunity should offer for their admission within the square.

A repetition of the former scene on this part of the field now took place, and the attacks, which were conducted with similar impetuosity, were met by a resistance equally undaunted. As if to overawe the square formed by the Royals and 28th British regiments, the French cavalry now made a simultaneous attack upon three of its faces, and these consisted mainly of the latter corps. Picton, who was again in the square, upon perceiving the approach of this apparently overwhelming force, suddenly and emphatically exclaimed, "28th! remember Egypt!" They answered him with a loud cheer, and reserving their fire until the cavalry had approached within a few yards of the square, their muskets were coolly and deliberately levelled at their assailants, who, in the next moment were hurled back in wild disorder, horses and riders tumbling over one another, and creating indescribable confusion. Similar in their results were all the attacks made upon the other British squares, which maintained their ground with the same unshaken steadiness and gallantry. These repeated charges by the French cavalry, though conducted by veteran soldiers, with admirable order

and compactness, and though affording innumerable instances of individual gallantry and daring, were certainly not carried on in a manner calculated to ensure success over infantry distinguished by such high training and such undaunted bravery as the British proved themselves to possess on this memorable occasion. There was no indication of a systematic attack upon any particular point by a rapid succession of charging squadrons—no *forlorn-hope-like* rush upon the opposing bayonets by the survivors of a discharge of musketry levelled at a leading squadron, and that rush followed up with lightning-like rapidity by the next squadron, which, in spite of the intervening space encumbered with the bodies of men and horses overthrown in the first charge, would thus obtain the greatest chance of effecting by its own weight and compact order, a breach in the square at the point originally selected for the assault. No such system of attack was attempted; but, on the contrary, it almost invariably happened that the leading squadron no sooner received the fire from the point attacked, than it either opened out from the centre to the right and left, and retired, or, it diverged altogether to one flank, leaving the succeeding divisions, in both cases, to observe the same movement; and, in this manner, the whole of the attacking force exposed itself to a far more extended range of fire and consequent loss, than if it had pursued the more daring, and at

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16th of June. the same time, more decisive, mode of attack just described.

Whilst a considerable portion of the French cavalry was thus fruitlessly assailing the British squares, a body of lancers, which had advanced considerably in the rear of those squares, made a sudden and unexpected charge upon the Hanoverian landwehr-battalion Verden, which was then, as previously explained, deployed a short distance in front of the Namur road: it was completely successful, and the greater part of the battalion was cut down by the lancers, who, emboldened by this triumph, were preparing to cross the Namur road, where a well-directed fire opened upon them by the landwehr-battalions Lüneburg and Osterode, lying concealed in the ditch by which it was lined, threw them into disorder, and forced them to a precipitate retreat.

The whole of the French cavalry was now withdrawn for the purpose of re-forming its broken and disordered ranks, leaving the Anglo-allied infantry to be again assailed by a vigorous cannonade from the heights above Gemioncourt. The only movement on the part of the Anglo-allied forces was the advance of the Brunswick guard-battalion and 2nd line-battalion in front of Quatre-Bras, by the right of the Charleroi road, as a precautionary measure against any flank attack that might be attempted from the wood of Bossu upon the advanced battalions of Picton's right.

It was now nearly five o'clock. The French infantry in the wood of Bossu was continually making progress towards the Namur road, across which increased numbers of the Dutch-Belgian troops, to whom the defence of the wood had been entrusted, were seen hastily retiring, some under the pretext of carrying wounded to the rear, but by far the greater portion as disorderly fugitives. In Piermont, the French light troops had been reinforced, and they were now evidently preparing for a more vigorous attack upon the extreme left of Wellington's forces; whilst certain movements in the vicinity of Gemioncourt gave intimation of an intended renewal of the attack upon Quatre-Bras. All prospect of the Anglo-allied cavalry encountering Ney's veteran dragoons with any chance of success had entirely vanished; whilst, on the other hand, the latter were on the point of being reinforced by the arrival of another cavalry-division. Pack's brigade had expended nearly the whole of its ammunition; its exposed position, and the continued cavalry-charges in its rear having precluded the transmission of the necessary supply. The Brunswickers had been greatly discouraged by the death of their gallant Prince; and the losses sustained by all the troops engaged had already been truly frightful. It was at this very moment, when Wellington's situation had become so extremely critical, that two infantry-brigades of the 3rd division, under Lieut. General Count Alten, most

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16th of June. opportunely reached the field of action by the Nivelles road. They were the 5th British brigade, commanded by Major General Sir Colin Halkett,* and the 1st Hanoverian brigade, under Major General Count Kielmansegge;† and were accompanied by Major Lloydd's‡ battery of British foot artillery, and by Captain Cleeves's§ battery of Hanoverian foot artillery.‖

By the arrival of these troops Wellington's force was augmented as follows :—

		Infantry.	Cavalry.	Guns.
	Force already in the field	18,090	2,004	28
British . .	5th infantry brigade .	2,254		
	Battery of foot artillery .			6
King's German Legion	Do. do. do.			6
Hanoverians . .	1st infantry brigade .	3,189		
Dutch-Belgians . .	7th Dutch line battalion¶	701		
		24,234	2,004	40

About the same time, Ney's troops were reinforced by the remaining division of Kellermann's

* Now Lieut. General Sir Colin Halkett, K.C.B.; G.C.H.

† Now General Count Kielmansegge, G.C.H.

‡ Major Lloydd was mortally wounded at the battle of Waterloo.

§ Lieut. Colonel Cleeves, K.H. of the Hanoverian artillery, died on the 8th of June, 1830.

‖ The remainder of this division, consisting of the 2nd brigade of the King's German legion, under Colonel Ompteda, had been detached by Alten when on the march from Soignies, and placed in observation on the Mons road, near the village of Arquennes; but it rejoined the division at Quatre-Bras during the night.

¶ As soon as Alten's division arrived at Nivelles, the 7th Dutch line battalion quitted that town to join its division at Quatre-Bras.—See page 90.

corps of heavy cavalry, so that his whole force was constituted as follows:— 16th of June.

	Infantry.	Cavalry.	Guns.
Force already in the field . .	15,750	3,765	44
12th cavalry-division		1,400	
1 battery of horse artillery . .			6
	15,750	5,165	50

Halkett's brigade, which led the British reinforcement, on reaching Quatre-Bras, was ordered to bring up its left shoulders, and advance along the space between the wood of Bossu and the Charleroi road, fronting the French left wing. Kielmansegge's brigade continued its march along the Nivelles road, and received orders to strengthen the extreme left, as also to support and, where necessary, to relieve the exhausted British battalions, which had so bravely withstood the fiercest onsets of a most daring and well-organized cavalry, and had so unflinchingly endured the incessant cannonade maintained against them by the well-served batteries on the French heights.

Again, the French skirmishers were creeping up the slope from the Gemioncourt inclosures, and Pack, who had united the remains of the 42nd and 44th regiments into one battalion, made the best show of resistance in his power to their teazing *tiraillade;* but being aware how very small a quantity of ammunition remained in his men's pouches, his anxiety on this point became extreme, the more so

16th of June. as he had good reasons for apprehending fresh attacks of cavalry. His advanced position in the immediate proximity of the formation of the enemy's columns of attack, naturally kept him on the look-out for effective British support; and on observing the head of Halkett's brigade, as the latter was advancing from Quatre-Bras, he instantly despatched an aide-de-camp to that general, with a message, that his own brigade had expended nearly the whole of its ammunition, and that if he did not offer him a support, he would be under the necessity of almost immediately abandoning his position. Halkett at once acceded to the proposal by sending forward the 69th British regiment, and desiring its commanding officer, Colonel Morice,* to obey any orders he might receive from General Pack.

In continuing the advance of the remainder of his brigade, Halkett found the Brunswick infantry retiring with precipitation: he immediately put himself in communication with their commanding officer, Colonel Olfermann, and by aid of the support which his brigade presented to their view, he succeeded in bringing them up under cover, in the ditch which, traversing the space between the wood and the high road, ran nearly parallel with the enemy's line. Leaving his brigade in the position he had taken up, in support of the Brunswickers

* Colonel Morice was killed at the battle of Waterloo.

and of Pack's brigade, and pending the arrival of further instructions from the Duke, Halkett galloped to the front, nearly beyond the farm of Gemioncourt, for the purpose of ascertaining, if possible, the disposition and intentions of the enemy. 16th of June.

Ney, on perceiving the arrival of this reinforcement to the Anglo-allied troops, despatched a peremptory order to d'Erlon to hasten to his support and join him without a moment's delay; and having well calculated the advantages he still retained, he resolved upon another bold and vigorous effort to secure the victory. The greater portion of the wood of Bossu was now in his possession; and this circumstance appeared to him to present the means of establishing himself at Quatre-Bras, and of thus enabling him effectually to turn Wellington's right flank, and cut off his line of retreat upon Brussels. With this view he greatly reinforced his infantry in the wood, through which he even ordered the advance of two batteries in a direction parallel to, and within a very short distance of, its eastern boundary, so that they might be prepared to act upon the plain, as soon as circumstances rendered such a proceeding advisable or expedient. He also threw forward additional light troops to strengthen his extreme right in the vicinity of Piermont; whilst his cavalry, so vastly superior, both in numbers and in efficiency, to that which the British commander had brought into the field, constituted his

16th of June.

main central force, and compensated in a great measure for the deficiency created in this point of his line by the drawing off of the infantry to the flanks. His arrangements for another general attack were concluded, and the cavalry destined to advance against the Allies on both sides of the Charleroi road had scarcely been put in motion, when Halkett, who, as before stated, had galloped to the front to reconnoitre, turned round his horse and hastened to dispose his brigade in such a manner as to render it fully prepared to brave the coming storm. On his way, he sent an intimation to Pack of his discovery, and orders to the 69th regiment to prepare forthwith to receive cavalry.

A sudden and heavy cannonade had already opened from the French heights—a sure prelude to the attack which was about to take place—and the 69th regiment was in the act of forming square, when the Prince of Orange rode up to it and asked what it was doing. Colonel Morice explained that he was forming square in pursuance of the instructions he had received, upon which His Royal Highness remarked that there was no chance of the cavalry coming on, ordered him to re-form column, and to deploy into line. During this last movement a strong body of French cuirassiers, taking advantage of the surrounding high corn, and of the circumstance of the regiment lying in a hollow, approached unperceived quite close to the spot, and rushing suddenly and impe-

tuously upon a flank, succeeded in completely rolling up the regiment, riding along and over the unfortunate men, of whom great numbers were cut down, and in the midst of the confusion thus created, captured and carried off one of the colours; in defence of which Major Lindsay* and Volunteer Clarke† highly distinguished themselves, and were desperately wounded. Some officers and men took shelter in the square formed by the 42nd and 44th regiments: the mounted officers gained the other side of the road, pursued by about twenty of the enemy, and escaped by riding through one of the Hanoverian battalions lining the Namur road. 16th of June.

The 30th regiment, which had also been deployed into line by the orders of the Prince of Orange, most fortunately discovered, in sufficient time, the approach of cavalry, (notwithstanding the extraordinary height of the rye, which greatly impeded all observation,) formed square with remarkable rapidity, and, reserving their fire until the very last moment, they completely dispersed and drove off a body of Piré's lancers, which had so suddenly come upon them. Picton, who, from the opposite side of the high road, was an eye-witness of this scene, was so

* Major Henry Lindsay, not having drawn his half-pay during four years, was struck off the establishment in 1831; but whether this omission on his part was caused by death, or otherwise, I know not.

† Lieutenant Christopher Clarke of the 42nd Highlanders died on the 23d of September, 1831.

16th of June.

much pleased with the perfect steadiness of the regiment, that, seizing a favourable opportunity of galloping up to it, he called for the commanding officer, and told Lieut. Colonel Hamilton * that he should report to the Duke the gallant conduct of his corps. The 73rd regiment (under Colonel Harris †), the 33rd (under Lieut. Colonel Elphinstone ‡), and the Brunswickers, were equally on the alert, but the French cavalry, on finding them prepared, diverged towards the high road.

Whilst that portion of Kellermann's dragoons which had dispersed the 69th regiment, were sweeping gallantly onwards in their bold career along the high road towards Quatre-Bras, the greater body of this corps advanced into the open space on the right of that road. Here Picton's gallant little bands found themselves again involved in one general onset of cavalry, made with a violence and fury which seemed to betoken a desperate resolve to harass the devoted squares to the last extremity, and to carry every thing by main force. At the same time a dense cloud of skirmishers, bursting forth from the enclosures of Piermont, threatened to turn the extreme left of the Anglo-allied army; whilst the French infantry in the wood of Bossu, close upon the northern

* Colonel Alexander Hamilton, C.B., died in June, 1838.

† Now Lieut. General Lord Harris, C.B.; K.C.H.

‡ Major General Elphinstone, C.B., died at Cabul in 1842.

boundary of the latter, equally endangered its extreme right. 16th of June.

At this moment, Ney's prospects were bright enough to justify his hopes of success, and he hailed the captured colour, presented to him by the cuirassier Lami of the 8th regiment, as the harbinger of victory. In fact, on whatever point of his line Ney now directed his view, his operations were full of promise as to the result.

It was certainly a most anxious moment to the British chief: but frightfully crippled as were his resources by the failure and hasty retreat of the great bulk of the Dutch-Belgian infantry, by the evident inferiority and utter helplessness of his cavalry, and by the dreadfully severe losses already inflicted upon his British regiments, he calmly surveyed the field of slaughter, and deliberately calculated upon the extent to which the heroic valour and admirable spirit so unequivocally displayed by the British and German infantry would enable him to bear up against the storm that now spread its fury along his whole line, until his eagle-glance might detect some favourable opening, seize some critical moment, to deal the stroke that, by a combination as sudden as the launching of the thunderbolt of the storm itself, should avert its fury, or oppose to it a barrier that might exhaust its strength.

The arrival of Lloyd's British, and Cleeves's German, batteries, attached to Alten's division,

16th of June. had already made a most important addition to the Duke's artillery-force: the former took post in front of Quatre-Bras on the right, the latter on the left, of the Charleroi road. Almost immediately afterwards, Major Kuhlmann's* battery of horse artillery of the King's German legion, belonging to the 1st division, which it had preceded on the Nivelles road, reached the field, and moved rapidly to the point of intersection of the Brussels and Nivelles roads, where it came into action, at the very moment the cuirassiers who had fallen upon Halkett's brigade were advancing in mass along the former road towards Quatre-Bras. Two guns under Lieutenant Speckmann† were posted so as to bear directly upon the French column, and completely to enfilade the road; and as the cuirassiers approached with the undaunted bearing that betokened the steadiness of veterans, and with the imposing display that usually distinguishes mailed cavalry, a remarkably well-directed fire was opened upon them: in an instant the whole mass appeared in irretrievable confusion; the road was literally strewed with corses of these steel-clad warriors and their gallant steeds: Kellermann himself was dismounted, and compelled like many of his followers to retire on foot.

It was at this moment that Colonel Laurent

* Lieut. Colonel Kuhlmann, K.H., of the Hanoverian artillery, died on the 19th of March, 1830.

† Captain Theodore Speckmann died on the 17th of September, 1834.

who had been despatched from the imperial head-quarters, reached Ney, with a pencilled note requiring the Marshal to detach the 1st corps towards St. Amand. Having fallen in with the head of the column of that corps, he had taken upon himself to alter the direction of its march; and, on coming up with Count d'Erlon, who had preceded his corps, and was then in front of Frasne, he showed him the note, and explained to him where he would find the head of his column. Shortly afterwards General d'Elcambre, chief of the staff to the 1st corps, arrived to report the movement which was in course of execution.* 16th of June.

Ney now saw clearly that at the very moment he required the aid of d'Erlon's corps, not only to counterbalance the arrival of reinforcements which had joined Wellington, but to give an efficient support to the renewed general attack he had projected, that corps had been placed beyond his reach, and that he must, in all probability, continue to fight the battle without any addition to the force he had already in the field. Nevertheless, he did not allow the circumstance to suspend the execution of his operations; and, with the hope of yet securing the assistance of the 1st corps, he sent back General d'Elcambre, with a peremptory order for its return towards Quatre-Bras.

It was soon after this that Ney received another

* A further explanation of the movements of d'Erlon's corps will be given in the account of the battle of Ligny, in Chapter VI.

16th of June. despatch from Napoleon, dated at two o'clock. From its general tenor it was evidently written previously to the departure of Colonel Laurent with the order for the flank movement of d'Erlon's corps, and therefore the bearer of it must have taken longer time than was necessary in conveying it to the Marshal. It announced that the Prussians were posted between Sombref and Bry, and that at half-past two Grouchy was to attack them with the 3rd and 4th corps d'armée, and expressed the Emperor's wish that Ney should also attack whatever enemy might be in his front, and, after having repulsed the latter, fall back in the direction of Ligny, to assist in enveloping the Prussians. At the same time it stated, that should Napoleon succeed in defeating the latter beforehand, he would then manœuvre in Ney's direction, to support in like manner the Marshal's operations. It concluded by requesting information both as to Ney's own dispositions and those of the enemy in his front.* This despatch reached Ney at a moment when he was most seriously engaged, when the issue of the battle was extremely doubtful, and the probability of his being enabled to

* The despatch (see Appendix XXI.) was addressed—"A. M. le Maréchal Prince de la Moskowa, à *Gosselies*, sur la route de Bruxelles;" and the route to be taken by the bearer was thus pencilled on the back:—"Wagnée—Bois de Lombuc." A duplicate of the despatch was forwarded, bearing the same address, and having the route marked—"Wagnée—Ransart." This circumstance proves that Napoleon was under the impression that Ney had *not* at that time (two o'clock) commenced his attack, but was still at Gosselies, and is of itself sufficient to correct the gross misstatements

afford the support required by Napoleon most questionable. 16th of June.

As the French cavalry retired, and left the ground occupied by Halkett quite clear of French troops, the two batteries which had advanced along the interior of the wood, as previously explained, suddenly opened from the edge of the latter a vigorous fire upon that general's brigade at a remarkably short range. The square of the 33rd regiment, which was posted upon rising ground, suffered most severely from this sudden and destructive cannonade. It was deemed advisable to deploy it into line, in which formation the regiment advanced towards the two Brunswick battalions, then fiercely engaged with the enemy's light troops near the skirt of the wood; but, upon approaching the latter, a report was spread along the line that French cavalry was in its rear, whereupon the regiment rushed precipitately into the wood, within which it was speedily re-formed. The remaining regiments of the brigade, together with the Brunswickers, having experienced more or less the destructive effects of the fire from the two French batteries, also withdrew into the north-eastern portion of the wood. This retrograde

which appear in the "Mémoires Historiques de Napoléon," and in the "Campagne de 1815, par le Général Gourgaud," censuring the Marshal for having neglected to act in accordance with the Emperor's instructions, because he did not attack Quatre-Bras, and gain possession of that post, on the morning of the 16th.

16th of June. movement was supported by Lloydd's foot-battery, which had moved rapidly to the front for the purpose of silencing the French guns; but before the British artillerymen could unlimber, several horses of the battery were killed, wheels were disabled, and, from the proximity of the enemy's guns, some of the gunners were literally cut in two by the round shot with which they were so closely assailed. Nevertheless, the battery succeeded not only in silencing its opponents, but also in forcing back into the wood a French column of infantry, which, advancing directly towards the Brussels road, had endeavoured to turn its right flank: after which brilliant service, Lloydd, perceiving no adequate support, judged it prudent, in the then crippled state of his battery, to retire to his former post, abandoning two guns for which he had not a sufficient number of horses remaining, and which consequently could not be recovered until the termination of the action.

Again a column of French infantry advanced from out of the wood towards the Brussels road, and entering the latter by the isolated house southward of Quatre-Bras, established itself in and about that building and its inclosures. Shortly afterwards another column advanced in support of the former one, which then emerged from its cover, and began to ascend that part of the Anglo-allied position occupied by the 92nd Highlanders. On perceiving

this, Major General Barnes,* adjutant general to the British forces, who had just ridden up to the right of the regiment, placed himself very conspicuously at the head of the Highlanders, waving his hat and exclaiming, "92nd, follow me!" In an instant the latter sprang out of the ditch in which they had hitherto been posted, and with great gallantry and steadiness charged down the slope. The French infantry hastily fell back, until having gained the partial shelter afforded them by the isolated house and its inclosures, they opened a most destructive fire upon the Highlanders, who nevertheless slackened not their pace, but drove the French out of their cover. Upon clearing this point, they encountered another severe fire from the second column that had moved forward in support. Their commanding officer, Colonel Cameron, here received his death-wound, and having lost the power of managing his horse, the latter carried him at its utmost speed along the road until he reached Quatre-Bras, where his servant was standing with his led horse, when the animal suddenly stopping, pitched the unfortunate officer on his head. The supporting column also gave way before the continued, bold, undaunted, though broken, advance of the 92nd Highlanders, who pursued their enemies, skirting the elbow of the wood, into which they retired upon perceiving

16th of June.

* Lieut. General Sir Edward Barnes, G.C.B., died on the 19th of March, 1838.

16th of June. a disposition on the part of the French cavalry to charge, and finding themselves exposed to a heavy cannonade which was rapidly thinning their ranks to a fearful extent.

Upon the extreme left of the Anglo-allied forces, the advance of the French light troops from Piermont and its vicinity was met in a most determined and gallant manner by the head of Kielmansegge's Hanoverian brigade, (which after having moved along the Nivelles road, exposed to the continued fire from the batteries on the French heights, had just reached that part of the field,) in conjunction with the 1st battalion 95th British rifles, and the 2nd Brunswick light battalion. The most determined efforts were made by the enemy to turn the Anglo-allied flank. The French infantry had already gained the high road, and were boldly pressing forward, when the British rifles, the Brunswick light infantry, and the Hanoverian field-battalion Lüneburg (under Lieut. Colonel von Klencke) dashed in amongst them. The contest was obstinate and severe ; but the Allied light troops having been reinforced by the Hanoverian field-battalion Grubenhagen, (under Lieut. Colonel von Wurmb,) gradually obtained the ascendancy, and dislodging their opponents from one inclosure after another, continued steadily advancing, and gaining ground.

Along the whole front of the central portion of the Anglo-allied army, the French cavalry was

expending its force in repeated but unavailing charges against the indomitable squares. The gallant, the brilliant, the heroic, manner in which the remnants of Kempt's and Pack's brigades held their ground, of which they surrendered not a single inch throughout the terrific struggle of that day, must ever stand pre-eminent in the records of the triumphs and prowess of British infantry. To relieve them as much as possible from the severe pressure they experienced, now that their ammunition was almost entirely exhausted, some of the Hanoverian battalions were judiciously thrown forward so as to afford them a close, immediate, and efficient, support, while others continued to line the Namur road; a disposition for which the arrival of Kielmansegge's brigade had presented the ready means, and which opposed an impregnable barrier to any further advance of the French cavalry, whose ranks were now thoroughly disordered, and their numbers greatly diminished, by their perseverance in a contest the hopelessness of which began to appear but too evident. 16th of June.

During that part of the contest just described, Ney received a further despatch from the Emperor by Colonel Forbin Janson. It was dated a quarter past three, and announced to the Marshal that Napoleon was at that moment seriously engaged. It desired Ney to manœuvre immediately so as to turn the right of the Prussians and fall upon their rear, and contained the remark that the latter

16th of June.

would thus be taken *en flagrant délit* at the moment they might be endeavouring to join the English.* The impossibility of Ney's complying with these directions was already sufficiently apparent.

At this time, Wellington received an addition to his forces by the arrival of the 1st and 3rd Brunswick light battalions, and the Brunswick brigade of artillery under Major Mahn, consisting of a battery of horse, and another of foot, artillery. The guns were immediately posted close upon the Namur road, at a short distance to the left of Quatre-Bras; and their fire combined with that of the British and German batteries, soon produced a very perceptible effect upon the French artillery. The infantry reinforced the 1st and 3rd Brunswick line-battalions occupying the houses of Quatre-Bras.

The most important reinforcement, however, was the arrival, at nearly the same moment—about half-past six o'clock—of the 1st British division, under Major General Cooke, consisting of the 1st brigade of guards, commanded by Major General Maitland,† and the 2nd brigade of guards, commanded by Major General Sir John Byng.‡ Their line of march having been by the Nivelles

* Appendix XXII.

† Now Lieut. General Sir Peregrine Maitland, K.C.B.

‡ Now General Lord Strafford, G.C.B.; G.C.H.

road, they came very opportunely upon the most critical point of the Anglo-allied position, namely, its extreme right, just at the moment when the French light troops, having driven out the Dutch-Belgian infantry, showed themselves in force along the northern boundary of the wood of Bossu, and some of their skirmishers had almost gained the high road. 16th of June.

Wellington's force was still further augmented by the recently arrived troops as follows:—

		Infantry.	Cavalry.	Guns.
	Force already in the field .	24,234	2,004	40
British . .	1st infantry division . . .	4,061		
	Battery of foot artillery . .			6
K. G. Legion . .	Do. horse do. . .			6
Brunswick . .	1st and 3d light battalions .	1,344		
	Battery of foot artillery . .			8
	Do. horse do. . .			8
		29,639	2,004	68

Ney's force actually present continued as before:—

Infantry.	Cavalry.	Guns.
15,750	5,165	50

The Prince of Orange, who had galloped along this road to meet the guards, immediately ordered the light companies under Lieut. Colonel Lord Saltoun,* to enter the wood. They rushed for-

* Now Major General Lord Saltoun, K.C.B.; G.C.H.

16th of June. ward with a loud cheer, and commenced a brisk fire on their opponents, who were soon made sensible of the superior description of force now brought against them. The remainder of the brigade speedily followed, and the loud, sharp, animated rattle of musketry, which was progressing rapidly into the very heart of the wood, imparted new life and vigour to the Anglo-allied troops on its eastern boundary, to whom in fact it served as a signal that on their right, as also in their rear, whence so shortly before they had just cause to apprehend imminent danger, all was now perfectly secure. Accordingly as the success of the British guards became more decided, those troops made a corresponding movement in advance. Halkett's brigade resumed its position along the little rivulet, and the two Brunswick battalions continued boldly to advance even beyond this line, resting their right close upon the wood. The 92nd Highlanders, whose loss had been so severe, were withdrawn through the wood to Quatre-Bras. In the mean time, Byng's brigade had closely followed up Maitland's in support, having previously sent forward its light companies under Lieut. Colonel Macdonell* round by Quatre-Bras, skirting the eastern border of the wood. The spirited and determined nature of the advance of

* Now Lieut. General Sir James Macdonell, K.C.B.; K.C.H.

the British guards not admitting of that restraint which, considering the many intricate parts of the wood, was essential for the preservation of order, led to great confusion in their ranks by the time they reached the southern extremity, after having fairly driven out the French; and in this state they ventured to pursue the enemy on the open ground, but were quickly repulsed by his reserves; and the French artillery poured so destructive a fire into this portion of the wood, that Maitland deemed it advisable to withdraw the 2nd battalion (under Colonel Askew*) to the rivulet, where it was immediately joined from the rear by the other battalion of his brigade (the 3rd, under Colonel the Hon. William Stuart†). 16th of June.

The time which would have been occupied in restoring the order and regularity that had been so completely lost during the progress of these battalions through the wood, was considered too precious for that purpose at such a moment, and the brigade was ordered to form line to its left, outside the wood, the men falling in promiscuously as fast as they emerged from their cover, and extending the line into the plain between the wood and the Brussels road. Thus formed, the line advanced, though but for a short distance, when it

* Now Lieut. General Sir Henry Askew, C.B.

† Lieut. General the Honourable William Stuart, C.B., died on the 15th of February, 1837.

16th of June.

opened and continued a brisk fire, under which the French infantry, in its immediate front, deployed with the utmost steadiness and gallantry. This advance had been followed by the Brunswick guard-battalion, which was now manœuvring to form on the left of Maitland's brigade. The French cavalry, which had been watching for an opportunity to charge the brigade, now made a dash at its left flank. When the irregular formation of the latter, which has been already explained, is considered, it is evident that any attempt to form square at that moment would have involved the British guards in inextricable confusion, and have rendered them an easy prey to the French horsemen. Rapid as was the advance of the latter, its object was frustrated in a manner which testifies the extraordinary discipline of the men of that brigade. Mere discipline it was not; it was an instinctive momentary impulse, which seemed to animate the whole corps with the sole conviction, that the only step to be taken, the only chance left for safety, consisted in a general and instantaneous movement to the ditch which bounded the wood on their right. This was accomplished with complete success, and the French cavalry, which had advanced in full confidence of an easy triumph, were hurled back in confusion by a volley from the ditch, which the brigade had lined with a rapidity, a dexterity, and a precision, quite wonderful; while at the same

moment, the Brunswick battalion threw itself into square, and received the cavalry with a degree of coolness, steadiness, and gallantry, which won for it the warmest admiration and encomiums of the British who witnessed the manœuvre. The flanking fire which was thus brought to bear so suddenly on the French cavalry by the Brunswickers, and the destructive front fire so deliberately poured in amongst them by the British guards from the ditch, fairly drove them out of this part of the field. 16th of June.

The further advance upon the Anglo-allied left had, in the mean time, kept equal pace with that on the right. Ney had been compelled to yield the strongholds by aid of which he had hoped to force the Duke's position: his infantry had been driven out of Piermont and the inclosures in front of his right, as also out of the wood of Bossu on his left; while the plain between the two positions, over which his cavalry had executed innumerable charges—charges that were occasionally suspended merely that the scattered bands might rally afresh to renew the onslaught with redoubled vigour, and that his artillery might pour upon the devoted squares its destructive missiles, by which each was shattered to its very centre,—was now completely cleared from the presence of a single horseman.

It was long after sunset, and darkness was sensibly approaching, when Wellington, now that his

16th of June.

wings and centre were relieved, in the manner already described, from the severity of a pressure of such long duration, led forward his victorious troops to the foot of the French position. The loud shouts which proclaimed the triumphant advance of his forces on either flank were enthusiastically caught up and responded to by those who constituted the main central line, and who had so nobly and so resolutely withstood and defied the impetuous battle-shock by which they had been so repeatedly and so pertinaciously assailed.

Ney, convinced of the utter futility, if not imminent hazard, of protracting the contest, withdrew the whole of his forces, and concentrated them on the heights of Frasne, throwing out a strong line of picquets, to which Wellington opposed a corresponding line, having the southern extremity of the wood of Bossu on the right, the inclosures south of Piermont on the left, and Gemioncourt in the centre, for its main supports.

The French picquets manifested an extraordinary degree of vigilance; the slightest movement on the side of the Anglo-allied picquets instantly attracted attention, and was noticed by a concentrated fire from the watchful sentries of the enemy. No movement, however, of any consequence was made on either side during the night. The wearied combatants sought that rest of which

they stood so much in need, and the silence in which the Anglo-allied bivouac soon became hushed, was only disturbed by the occasional arrival of additional reinforcements, consisting principally of British cavalry. 16th of June.

Ney was joined by the 1st corps, after the termination of the action. At nine o'clock, d'Erlon presented himself to the Marshal for the purpose of reporting to him his proceedings, and of receiving his orders, after which the corps was bivouacked in the rear of Frasne; with the exception, however, of Durutte's division (the 4th), and Jaquinot's light cavalry-brigade, which d'Erlon had left on the field of Ligny, in front of the extreme right of the Prussian army; a measure which he had deemed advisable in order to prevent the enemy from debouching into the plain between Bry and the wood of Delhutte.

It is singular that Napoleon, who at Fleurus held so powerful a reserve as that consisting of the imperial guard and the 6th corps, and who was in perfect ignorance of the true state of affairs at Quatre-Bras, should have ventured to withdraw from Ney a force amounting to more than one-half of that which he had originally placed at his disposal. It was decidedly a false step, from which no advantage resulted on his own field of battle, whilst there can be very little doubt that it lost him that of Quatre-Bras.

16th of June. The losses sustained in this battle by the Anglo-allied army in killed, wounded, and missing, were as follows:—

British	2,275 *
Hanoverians	369 †
Brunswickers	819 ‡
	3,463 men.

To these must be added the loss of the Dutch-Belgian troops, amounting probably to about 1,000 killed and wounded, § which makes the entire loss of the Anglo-allied army equal to about 4,463 men.

The French loss amounted to about 4,000 killed, wounded, and missing.

Such was the battle of Quatre-Bras: a battle in which the British, the Hanoverian, and the Brunswick, infantry, covered itself with imperishable glory; to estimate the full extent of which we must constantly bear in mind, that the whole brunt of the action fell upon that infantry; that through-

* For a detailed return, including officers and non-commissioned officers —See Appendix XXIII.

† The above number is taken from the *London Gazette* of the 8th of July, 1815. No detailed regimental returns exist of the losses of either the King's German legion, or the Hanoverian subsidiary corps, on each day of the 16th, 17th, and 18th of June, *separately*: the returns which will be found in the Appendix of Volume II. embrace the casualties that occurred during those three days.

‡ For a detailed return, including officers—See Appendix XXIV.

§ A detailed return of the killed, wounded, and missing, of the Dutch-Belgian troops, during the 16th, 17th, and 18th of June, will be found in the Appendix of Volume II.

out the greater part of the day it was totally unaided by any cavalry, that arm of the Allies in the field having, at the outset, proved itself incompetent to engage with the French; and, lastly, that it was completely abandoned in the latter part of the action by the 2nd Dutch-Belgian infantry-division, amounting to no less than 7,533 men.* 16th of June.

When the imagination dwells upon that which constitutes one of the most prominent features of the battle—the manner in which the gallant Picton, on finding there was no cavalry at hand wherewith to charge effectively that of the enemy, led on the British infantry, and dashed into the midst of the French masses, stoutly maintaining his ground in defiance of their oft-repeated assaults, invariably scattering back their charging squadrons in confusion, and this, too, in the face

* Whether the retirement of those troops from the immediate field of action arose from disaffection, from supineness in the cause in which their services had been required, or from any other motive, I am not prepared to pass an opinion, and prefer leaving the point open to the discrimination and judgment of the public. To assist the latter in its endeavours to arrive at a just conclusion, I may mention, as affording some little insight into the spirit by which this force was animated, the following circumstances, related to me by officers of the 1st British division. On a near approach to the field, the latter fell in with various groups of Dutch-Belgian infantry retiring in great disorder and precipitation. Perceiving that they were neither wounded, nor dispossessed of their arms, they questioned some of them as to the cause of their retiring. From one party they received a reply that their commanding officer was killed, and therefore it was useless to remain; from another, that they did not come there to fight, but merely to witness the advance of the French; and from a third, that Napoleon would certainly be victorious, and that it would therefore be absurd to contend against him!

16th of June. of a splendid cavalry, animated by the best spirit, and headed by a Kellermann, whose fame and merit were so universally acknowledged — with what exulting pride and heartfelt gratitude must not the British nation reflect on the heroic valour displayed by her sons in their noble fulfilment of the desires and expectations of her Cambrian chief!

The zealous and cordial support which the Hanoverians and the Brunswickers afforded to their British brethren in arms, the devotion with which they commingled with them in the thickest of the fight, are indelibly engraven in the grateful memory of every true German, and remain recorded as a lasting theme of admiration in the history of their fatherland.

The defeat sustained by the French was certainly not attributable, in the slightest degree, to any deficiency, on their part, of either bravery or discipline. Their deportment was that of truly gallant soldiers, and their attacks were all conducted with a chivalric impetuosity, and an admirably sustained vigour, which could leave no doubt on the minds of their opponents as to the sincerity of their devotion to the cause of the Emperor.

In a strategical point of view, both parties gained certain important advantages, and lost others, which had been comprised within their respective plans of operation. Ney had succeeded in preventing the junction of the Anglo-allied

army with the Prussians, and might have obtained still more important results, had he not been deprived of the services of d'Erlon's corps, the arrival of which he had been so fully led to expect. Wellington, though he had been compelled to relinquish all hope of being enabled to afford that aid to Blücher which, in the morning, he had proffered to him, yet, by maintaining his ground at Quatre-Bras sufficiently long to admit of the arrival of reinforcements which enabled him to obtain a brilliant victory, he completely succeeded in frustrating the grand object of Ney's movement, which had been to defeat the Anglo-allied troops thus advancing, in detail, and also to operate upon Blücher's right flank. The Duke's success gave ample and convincing evidence of the sagacity and foresight with which his plans had been devised and matured, as also of the soundness of those calculations by which he had for some time previously placed himself, with the confident security of a master of his art, in a posture of defence, fully prepared to meet every emergency, from whatever point, or however suddenly, the coming storm might arise. And now that he had gained the battle, and secured the important point of Quatre-Bras, upon which the remainder of his troops were advancing, and where the greater portion of them would arrive in the evening and during the night, he was perfectly ready and willing, should the Prussians prove victorious at

16th of June.

16th of June. Ligny, to renew the contest on the following morning, by attacking Ney with his collected force; and then, if successful, (of which little doubt could be entertained,) by a junction with Blücher's right, to operate upon Napoleon's left, so as to bring the great mass of the combined armies to bear directly upon the main body of the French; or, in case of a defeat of the Prussians, to make good his retreat along his principal line of operation, in such a manner as to secure a position between Quatre-Bras and Brussels, favourable for a co-operation of Blücher's forces with his own, and for presenting a bold and determined stand against the further advance of the French Emperor.*

* Ney has been frequently reproached for not having established himself at Quatre-Bras early on the morning of the 16th, in pursuance of orders alleged to have been given by Napoleon to that effect; and certain writers, desirous both of exculpating the errors of the French Emperor by attributing the failure at Quatre-Bras to Ney's want of energy, and of detracting from the merits of Wellington by representing that he was taken by surprise, have argued that had Ney, in obedience to orders, united his whole force and commenced his attack at an earlier hour, he would have frustrated the concentration of the Anglo-allied army. To such arguments, as far as Ney is concerned, the facts and circumstances which have been detailed, and the recorded instructions of Napoleon, offer a complete refutation; and, as regards Wellington, it requires but a slight insight into his dispositions, to prove that they were most fully calculated to ensure sufficient time for the assembling of his forces on the French line of attack. It has already been explained that Genappe, Quatre-Bras, and Frasne, were the points upon the Charleroi road on which the left of the Anglo-allied army rested. Frasne was the advanced post of the troops occupying the two first-named points, and was distant about ten miles from the Sambre, and about thirty miles from the French frontier. The passages along this river in its front were occupied by Prussian troops, whose

Orders were now forwarded for the movement of Clinton's division on the following morning, at 16th of June.

outposts were extended to about midway between the Sambre and the line of frontier from which the enemy would have to advance. Hence, however early in the morning the enemy might commence his march, he would have to drive in the Prussian outposts, to force the passages of the Sambre, and, in addition to all the delays, impediments, and mischances, to which such an advance would be subjected, he would have to perform altogether a march of more than thirty miles from the nearest point of the French territory, before he could reach even the advanced post of Frasne, which was about three miles in front of Quatre-Bras. Under such circumstances, it was not at all probable that any overpowering force could arrive at Quatre-Bras in one day's march. Now let us compare the extent of such a march with that which would have been required of the nearest Anglo-allied troops ordered to collect at Quatre-Bras. Enghien, the head-quarters of the most remote division of the 1st corps, was about twenty-seven miles distant from Quatre-Bras; the reserve, at Brussels, was about twenty miles distant. The whole of these troops, therefore, amounting to more than 30,000 men, could be collected at Quatre-Bras before any similar amount of force could be brought against that point by the enemy, provided a vigilant look-out was maintained, and the necessary measures were taken for procuring the earliest intelligence of the enemy's advance. The Duke of Wellington had given special instructions to the Prince of Orange to watch the enemy's movements from Binche, which was occupied by the extreme right of the advanced line of the Prussian army; also to Major General Sir William Dörnberg, to obtain the earliest information concerning any movements along that part of the French frontier facing Mons, at which point he was posted for this purpose; whilst Lieut. Colonel von Wissell, with the 1st hussars of the King's German legion, kept up a good look-out along the line of Tournai, Ypres, and Furnes. In fact, the Duke's arrangements as regarded the disposition of his forces, the selection of the interior points of concentration, and the necessary precautions enjoined along the line of outposts, were fully calculated to guard against any attempted surprise. It now remains to be shown how far the intentions of his Grace, as developed by these arrangements, were carried into effect by his subordinates in command. Solre-sur-Sambre, whence the French left main column of attack debouched at two o'clock on the morning of the 15th, and Thuin, where the Prussian outposts first became engaged with the advanced guard of that column, were equidistant about nine miles from Binche, whence the Prussians were withdrawn by Zieten about five o'clock, and where the French advance must have consequently been known by that hour at the latest. From two to three hours would

16th of June. daybreak, from Nivelles to Quatre-Bras; and of Colville's division, at the same hour, from Enghien

have sufficed for the transmission of orders from Binche to the whole of the troops of the 1st corps of the Anglo-allied army to assemble at their respective head-quarters of brigades, and to prepare to march at a moment's notice. By means of a vigilant reconnaissance, the object of the enemy's advance, and his attack upon Charleroi at ten o'clock, might have been known at Binche between eleven and twelve o'clock, and the entire 1st corps might have been put in movement upon Quatre-Bras by half-past two, or three, o'clock; at which important point the troops would thus have been gradually collected, and the whole have been assembled before night. By a properly-organized system of expresses along the high road from Binche to Brussels, the first intelligence of the French advance could certainly have been conveyed to head-quarters by ten o'clock in the forenoon, and that of the French attack upon Charleroi, by four or five o'clock in the afternoon. The Duke would thus have been enabled to place all the troops of the 2nd corps, of the cavalry, and of the reserve, in readiness, in the middle of the day, to move at a moment's notice; and subsequently to have put them in movement that evening in support of the 1st corps at Quatre-Bras, where his whole army might have been assembled at a very early hour on the following morning. When, therefore, those who venture to censure Ney for not having established himself at Quatre-Bras early in the morning of the 16th, assert that *if* that Marshal had thus acted, Wellington, by having allowed himself to be surprised, would have exposed his troops to the risk of being crushed in detail, they ought at least to concede, that if the excellent arrangements made by the Duke had been duly and promptly acted upon by his subordinates, Ney could not have fulfilled the task they are pleased to assign to him, even supposing him to have received the order, and to have possessed the means, for its accomplishment, which, as I trust having clearly shown, was by no means the case. Unfortunately, the commander of the 1st Anglo-allied corps did not act up to the spirit of his instructions, but, making *himself* the bearer of the intelligence of the French advance, proceeded to Brussels, where he arrived soon after three o'clock in the afternoon. The only real surprise which the Duke experienced on this occasion, was in finding the Prince of Orange, on the night of the 15th, at the Duchess of Richmond's ball, when he delicately suggested to his Royal Highness the expediency of his returning to his corps. There was also a certain degree of remissness on the part of Major General Sir William Dörnberg, who, as before stated, was posted in observation at Mons. This point was about eleven miles from Binche, and seventeen from Solre-sur-Sambre, so that if a vigilant look-out had been maintained, and a system of rapid communication along

to Nivelles. The reserve-artillery was directed to move at daybreak, on the following morning, to — 16th of June.

the line of outposts established, that officer could not have remained long ignorant of the commencement of hostilities; but it was not until he received, late in the day, the despatch from the Duke requiring information as to appearances in front of Mons, that he communicated at all with his Grace. It is right, however, to observe that as no movement was made by the French in his direct front, he had nothing to communicate to head-quarters on that point, and that as no intimation of an attack reached him from the outposts of the 1st corps, on his left, he may have concluded that nothing of consequence had taken place.

My object being to relate only that which actually occurred, I do not feel myself called upon to enter into the question of what would have taken place under other circumstances; and perhaps even the brief remarks I have here made may be already considered too digressive; but I cannot refrain from still further noticing the assertions made by the writers before alluded to, as to what would have resulted, had Ney attacked Quatre-Bras at an earlier hour of the 16th, with both the 1st and 2nd corps d'armée. Let us, for the sake of argument, suppose that by an extraordinary exertion on the part of the French army, these two corps under Ney had succeeded in gaining that post on the morning of the 16th—Do these gentlemen imagine that in this case the Anglo-allied troops would have continued to march upon Quatre-Bras, in detached bodies, from their respective cantonments, so as to afford Ney the opportunity of 'crushing'* them in detail? Can they not conceive the difference between troops marching upon a point for concentration, and troops marching towards a point occupied by an enemy? Can they not conceive the possibility of Nivelles and Genappe then becoming the points of general concentration? Can they not conceive that at these two points such concentration could be effected with more rapidity, and in greater force, than at Quatre-Bras? Can they not conceive the possibility of Wellington taking up a sufficiently strong position on the heights commanding the defile of Genappe, and preparing, at the same time, to operate, with his collected force at Nivelles, upon the left flank of the enemy's advance? Can they not conceive the possibility of Ney, having Napoleon with the main army at such a distance as Fleurus, the whole Prussian army on his right, a very considerable portion of the Anglo-allied army on his left, and the remainder of the latter

* "It was well for the British corps that the French Marshal did not concentrate his whole army together, and commence his attack with his united force; for if so, they must inevitably have been crushed."—*Alison's History of Europe*, vol. x. page 929.

16th of June. Quatre-Bras, there to receive further orders; and the 10th infantry-brigade, under Major General Sir John Lambert,* was directed to march, at the same hour, from Assche to Genappe, there to remain until further orders.

The tremendous roar of artillery in the direction of Ligny gave a sufficient intimation to the Duke that a great battle had taken place in that quarter, but as it seemed to continue stationary, and only ceased as night set in, he was doubtful of the result, and remained in this state of suspense and uncertainty until the following morning; the officer who had been despatched in the night to Quatre-Bras from the Prussian head-quarters with the expected communication, having been surprised in the dark, and made a prisoner by the French.

force in his front, being induced by the knowledge which he must have had of the energetic and decisive character of Wellington, to hesitate in advancing, under such circumstances, along the direct road to Brussels? Can they not conceive the possibility of Ney (who, they must admit, was a general possessing both great abilities and long experience,) not venturing to advance beyond Quatre-Bras without leaving in his rear at least one-half of his force to secure his line of operation against any hostile attempt on the part of either the Prussians by the Namur road, or the Anglo-allies along that of Nivelles, as also to prevent any interruption of his communication with Napoleon,—a precaution which would subject him to the risk of finding his further progress opposed by superior force in both front and flank, of suffering his own troops to be beaten in detail, and, consequently, of compromising the safety of the main French army? Can they not—but it is needless to pursue the subject further. If they cannot conceive these *possibilities*, they should pause before they presume to attempt to diminish, in the estimation of the world, the merits of Britain's illustrious chieftain, by boldly hazarding assertions so utterly incompatible with *probabilities*.

* Now General Sir John Lambert, G.C.B.

CHAPTER VI.

Blücher decides upon accepting battle in the position in rear of Fleurus—The position of Ligny strategically considered—The position itself described—Distribution of Zieten's corps on the morning of the 16th of June—At eleven o'clock, Pirch's corps is posted as a reserve to Zieten's—Thielemann's corps reaches Sombref about noon—Its distribution on the field—General view of Blücher's dispositions—About ten o'clock, the foremost of the French troops debouch in two columns from the wood of Fleurus, and draw up in front of this town—Napoleon's views and dispositions—At two o'clock, he communicates to Ney his intention to commence his attack upon the Prussians, and desires that Marshal also to attack the enemy in his front—The French light troops gain possession of Fleurus—The cavalry of Zieten's corps falls back upon the position of Ligny—The French army advances and takes up a position preparatory to its attack—Strength of the French forces under Napoleon—Strength of the Prussian forces under Blücher—Blücher's arrangements—He moves Thielemann's corps into his front line, of which it then forms the left wing—Blücher's views and dispositions—Tactical defects of the position of Ligny—Napoleon commences the battle with an attack by Vandamme's corps upon St. Amand—Gérard's corps attacks Ligny—Contest in these villages—The French carry St. Amand—Nature of the contest between Thielemann's and Grouchy's corps—Girard's division gains possession of St. Amand-la-haye—Blücher's dispositions for retaking this village, securing Wagnelé, and impeding any further advance from the French left—Failure of the Prussian attack upon St. Amand-la-haye—Blücher decides on a renewed attack upon this village, as a diversion in favour of his projected movement against the French left—Napoleon reinforces this flank—The Prussians retake St. Amand-la-haye—Blücher reinforces his extreme right with cavalry—Prussian attack upon Wagnelé unsuccessful—The French regain St. Amand-la-haye—Continued contest in Ligny—Blücher reinforces his troops employed in the defence of this village—Long and desperate struggle in the villages of St. Amand-la-haye, Wagnelé, and the Hameau de St. Amand—Napoleon, perceiving that Blücher has scarcely any reserve remaining at his disposal, resolves upon attacking the Prussian centre—He suspends his meditated attack in consequence of a large column advancing apparently from Frasne towards his left

rear—This column is discovered to be d'Erlon's corps d'armée—This circumstance explained—Thielemann detaches a portion of his cavalry with some guns across the Ligny, along the Fleurus road—They are attacked and driven back by part of Grouchy's cavalry—Disposition and state of the Prussian troops at the moment Napoleon advances with a formidable reserve across the Ligny—The Prussian infantry forced to evacuate Ligny—Failure of Prussian cavalry-attacks upon the advancing column of French infantry—Blücher's horse is killed, and the Prince thrown under him—Critical situation of the Prussian commander—He is removed from the field—Retreat of Prussian infantry upon Bry—Contest at Sombref—Retreat of the Prussians from St. Amand and St. Amand-la-haye—Zieten's and Pirch's corps retire by Marbais and Tilly—Thielemann's corps retains its position—Close of the battle—Distribution of the French troops—Disposition of the Prussian troops—Bülow's corps reaches Gembloux during the night—Losses sustained by both armies—Consequences of the Prussian defeat—Remarks upon the battle.

16th of June.

PRINCE Blücher having ascertained, on the morning of the 16th, that his communication with the left division of the Duke of Wellington's forces, by Quatre-Bras, continued uninterrupted, resolved upon accepting battle in the position in rear of Fleurus, which had been previously fixed upon as the one most eligible, in the event of the enemy's adoption of that line of operations respecting which all doubt and uncertainty had now ceased. Its importance in a strategical point of view, apart from tactical considerations, was manifest. Wellington having, on his part, selected Quatre-Bras as the point whereon to concentrate his forces, the position in question, connected as it was with the latter by a paved road over an extent of not more than six or seven miles, offered great facility for co-operation and mutual support upon whichever

point the great mass of the French army might be directed. Should it prove tenable, then, considered in conjunction with the advance of the Russians from the Rhine, the whole line of the Meuse below Namur, and the communications with Aix-la-Chapelle and the Prussian states, were effectually secured. If, on the other hand, either position should be forced by the enemy, then Mont St. Jean and Wavre, upon parallel lines of retreat towards Brussels and Louvain, would likewise offer the means of co-operation on the south side of the forest of Soignies; and supposing Blücher willing to risk for a time his communication with the right bank of the Meuse, concentric lines of retreat upon Brussels would bring the two armies in combined position in the immediate front of that capital. Supposing also that Napoleon's plan had been to advance by Mons, the concentration of the Prussian forces could not have been effected upon a more favourable point than that of Sombref, whence they could have advanced in support of their allies, leaving a sufficient portion of Zieten's corps to watch the approaches by Charleroi: and, finally, had the French Emperor directed his main attack by Namur, the retreat of Thielemann's corps would have secured time for effecting the concentration of the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Prussian corps d'armée, if not also of the 4th, while the Duke of Wellington's forces might have assembled at Quatre-Bras, for the purpose of

16th of June.

16th of June. meeting any secondary attack from the Charleroi side, and of forming a junction with the Prussian army.

The position itself comprises the heights of Bry, Sombref, and Tongrines, contiguous to the high road connecting Namur with Nivelles, by Quatre-Bras, and to the point of junction of that road with the one from Charleroi, by Fleurus. These heights are bounded upon the south-west and western sides, or right of the position, by a ravine, through which winds a small rivulet along the villages of Wagnelé, St. Amand-la-haye, and St. Amand, near the lower end of which last, it unites with the greater rivulet of the Ligny; and, along the whole of the south side, or front of the position, by a valley, through which flows the Ligny, and in which lie, partly bordering the stream itself, and partly covering the declivities, the villages of Ligny, Mont Potriaux, Tongrenelles, Boignée, Ballatre, and Vilrets. At the last-named point, another small rivulet falls into the Ligny on quitting a deep ravine, which commences northward of the village of Botey, and thus tends to the security of the extreme left of the position. The extreme right, however, resting upon the Namur road, in the direction of Quatre-Bras, was completely en l'air. The heights in rear of St. Amand, Ligny, and Sombref, are somewhat lower than those on the opposite or Fleurus side of the valley; and, from the nature of the ground,

troops, particularly artillery, are more exposed on the former than on the latter, where the undulations afford better cover. The descent from either side into the villages of Wagnelé, St. Amand-la-haye, and St. Amand, is gentle: between the latter point and Mont Potriaux the sides of the valley descend more rapidly; and below that village they become steep, particularly about Tongrines, Boignée, and Balatre; while the ground above commands alternately from side to side. Above Mont Potriaux, the bed of the valley is soft, and occasionally swampy: below that point it partakes still more of this character. The buildings in the villages are generally of stone, with thatched roofs, and comprise several farm-houses with court-yards, presenting great capabilities for defence. St. Amand and Boignée are the most salient points of the position, the central portion of which retires considerably, particularly near Mont-Potriaux. 16th of June.

In the morning of the 16th, the 1st corps (von Zieten's) occupied that portion of the position which is circumscribed by the villages of Bry, St. Amand-la-haye, St. Amand, and Ligny. The four brigades of this corps had been very much mixed up together when occupying these villages during the night, which will account in some measure for the promiscuous manner in which their several battalions appear to have been distributed during the battle. The main body of the

16th of June. corps was drawn up on the height between Bry and Ligny, and upon which stands the farm and wind-mill of Bussy, the highest point of the whole position. Seven battalions of the 2d brigade (General von Pirch II.) were formed immediately in rear of this farm; the 28th regiment and 2d Westphalian landwehr in the first, and the 2d and 3d battalions of the 6th regiment in the second line; while the 3d battalion of the latter regiment occupied the farm itself, which was put into a state of defence. Two battalions of the 4th brigade, (General Count Henkel,) namely, the 2d battalions of the 19th regiment and of the 4th Westphalian landwehr, stood on the slope between the 2d brigade and Ligny; while the remaining four battalions of the brigade—the 1st and 3d of the 19th regiment, and the 1st and 3d of the 4th Westphalian landwehr—were charged with the defence of Ligny. The village of Bry was occupied by the 3d battalions of the 12th and 24th regiments, belonging to the 1st brigade (General von Steinmetz); and the 2d battalion of the 1st Westphalian landwehr was posted in rear of the village, in support. The 1st and 3d companies of the Silesian rifles, attached to this brigade, were distributed about the intersected ground between Bry and St. Amand-la-haye. The remainder of the 1st brigade was posted on the height in the rear of St. Amand, its right resting on St. Amand-la-haye; the 1st and 2d battalions of the 12th

regiment on the right, and the 1st and 2d battalions of the 24th regiment on the left, forming a first, and the 1st and 3d battalions of the 1st Westphalian landwehr forming a second line. The defence of St. Amand was confided to three battalions of the 3d brigade (General von Jagow)—the 1st and 2d of the 29th regiment, and the 2d battalion of the 3d Westphalian landwehr. The remaining six battalions of this brigade were posted in reserve northward of Ligny, and near the Bois du loup. The 2d and 4th companies of the Silesian rifles were thrown into Ligny. The reserve-cavalry of Zieten's corps continued in advance, upon the Fleurus high road, watching the movements of the enemy. 16th of June.

It was eight o'clock when these dispositions were completed; and about eleven o'clock Pirch's corps, which more than an hour before had quitted its bivouac near Mazy, was formed up, in reserve to Zieten. The 5th brigade (General von Tippelskirchen) stood across the high road, near its intersection with the old Roman road, in the customary Prussian brigade-order of three lines of columns of battalions at deploying intervals, and had in its front the two foot-batteries, Nos. 10 and 37. The 6th brigade (General von Krafft) was posted in similar order in rear of the farm of Bussy, and in left-rear of Bry. The 7th brigade (General von Brause) stood more to the left: it had only the 14th regiment then present, for the

16th of June. 22nd regiment and the Elbe landwehr did not rejoin it until one o'clock in the afternoon. The 8th brigade (Colonel von Langen) was ordered to remain upon the high road leading from Sombref to Fleurus, until the arrival of the 3rd corps (Thielemann's). One of its battalions—the 3rd of the 21st regiment—as also two squadrons of the Neumark dragoons attached to this corps, had been left in the line of outposts beyond the Meuse, towards Philippeville, and did not rejoin it until the 20th of June.

The reserve-cavalry of Pirch's corps, under General von Jürgass, was stationed in rear of the high road, and on the west side of Sombref.

The twelve-pounder batteries, Nos. 4 and 8, and the horse-batteries, Nos. 5 and 18, remained in reserve, near Sombref.

Thielemann's corps, which had quitted Namur about seven o'clock in the morning, had reached Sombref before twelve. It was immediately assigned its position in that part of the field which lies between Sombref and Balatre, and was posted in columns upon both high roads, here to remain available for either a movement to the right, or for the occupation of the position in left front of Sombref, along the heights in rear of the Ligny rivulet.

Such were the dispositions made by Blücher previously to Napoleon's advancing from Fleurus. The occupation of Ligny and St. Amand—the

most salient part of the position—by Zieten's corps, and the posting of the reserve-cavalry of the latter in the intervening space between those villages and Fleurus, were justly calculated to secure for the Prussian commander ample time for further developing his line of battle in such a manner as the direction and mode of his opponent's attack might render most expedient. 16th of June.

At daybreak the French troops which lay along the Sambre, and which belonged to that main portion of the army which was more immediately under the orders and guidance of Napoleon, quitted their bivouacs, and marched to join their leading columns, the position of which in front of Fleurus was described in the fourth chapter. It was nearly ten o'clock when these troops debouched in two columns from the Fleurus wood—the one along the high road, the other more to the right—and drew up in two lines within a short distance of Fleurus. In the first line, Pajol's light, and Excelmans' heavy, cavalry, formed the right, and Vandamme's corps, the left, wing; while Gérard's corps occupied the centre. Girard's division was detached some little distance on the extreme left. The imperial guard and Milhaud's corps of cuirassiers constituted the second line. Nearly an hour was passed in this position, during which the Emperor rode along the line of vedettes, and reconnoitred the enemy's dispositions.

It appeared to Napoleon that Blücher had taken

16th of June.

up a position perpendicular to the Namur road, and had, in this way, completely exposed his right flank; whence he inferred that the Prince placed great reliance upon the arrival of auxiliary forces from the Duke of Wellington's army.*

A single glance at the Prussian position as it has been described, will suffice to prove that the French emperor was in error as regarded Blücher's assumed line of battle, and that so far from its having been perpendicular to, it was, in the general military acceptation of the term, parallel with, the Namur road. At the same time it is proper to remark, that he may have been misled by the massing of the Prussian troops between the salient point of the position, St. Amand, and the road in question, as well as by the direction of the line of the occupied villages of St. Amand, Ligny, and Sombref.† It must also be acknowledged that

* He may also have infered from the disposition which he imagined Blücher to have made that the latter designed retiring upon Quatre-Bras in the event of a defeat, and should this view be correct, it strengthens the probability of Napoleon's having been ignorant of the non-arrival of Bülow's corps, notwithstanding the insinuation made of the contrary in the historical memoirs collected at St. Helena, and in which it is admitted that he was unacquainted with the disposition even of Thielemann's corps, inasmuch as he imagined its arrival to have taken place during the battle, whereas it had entered the field by twelve o'clock in the morning, and was fully assembled at Sombref, though not distributed in position, at the time of his reconnaissance.

† The following remark by von Gamitz, in his "Geschichte des Feldzugs von 1815," offers, if not a correct, at least a very reasonable view of this question:—"Napoleon was too practical a general to judge of the position of an opponent by the direction and extent of lines. It is much more probable that he made use of the expression, reported by persons

16th of June.

although the inference was incorrectly drawn, it accorded in substance with the real fact, that Blücher did rely upon the arrival of a portion of Wellington's forces by the Namur road from Quatre-Bras.

Napoleon having returned from his reconnaissance, immediately gave his orders for the advance of the army, and for the disposition of each individual corps in his intended line of battle. Impressed with the important advantage which, according to his assumed view of Blücher's position, might accrue from a vigorous and well-timed attack upon the right and rear of the Prussians, while vigorously assailing them himself in their front, he directed Soult to address to Ney the despatch, dated two o'clock,* to which reference was made in the preceding chapter, acquainting the Marshal that in half an hour thence he purposed attacking Blücher, posted between Sombref and Bry, and desiring that he would, on his part, also attack whatever might be in his front, and that after having vigorously repulsed the enemy, he should move towards the Emperor's field of battle, and fall upon the right and rear of the Prussians; adding, at the same time, that should

who were present, 'Le vieux renard ne débusque pas.' This would at all events have exhibited on his part a better judgment of his adversary than does the opinion he has since asserted to have formed at the time upon the Prussian position."

* Appendix XXI.

16th of June. the Emperor be first successful, he would then move to the support of the army at Quatre-Bras.

The French light troops moved forward against Fleurus, of which place they gained possession between eleven and twelve o'clock, and then opened from their light artillery a cannonade upon the Prussian cavalry-posts taken up by the 6th uhlans. The latter immediately retired, and formed upon the left of the Brandenburg dragoons, which regiment had been placed in front of the Tombe de Ligny, along with the horse-battery No. 2, in support. The Brandenburg uhlans were also in support, but more to the rear, and on the left of the high road.

At this time, Napoleon was on the height of Fleurus, again reconnoitring the Prussian position; and it was also about the same period that Wellington joined Blücher in person near the mill of Bussy.*

As soon as von Röder perceived the imposing array of the French columns in full advance, he ordered the immediate retreat of his cavalry, which he covered with the 6th uhlans and the Brandenburg dragoons, together with two pieces of horse-artillery. He sent the main body, which he had stationed in a hollow, in rear of the Tombe de Ligny, as also the remainder of the artillery, across the Ligny, with directions to take post

* See page 92.

between the village of that name and Sombref. He himself continued with the above two regiments, and the two guns, near the Tombe de Ligny, until he received orders also to retire. 16th of June.

In the mean time the main body of the French army advanced with great regularity in columns of corps. The left column, consisting of the 3rd corps d'armée under Vandamme, to which was attached the infantry-division under Lieut. General Girard, belonging to Reille's corps, (then with Ney,) being destined to advance against St. Amand, the most salient point of the Prussian position, and therefore having the shortest distance to pass over, was the first to take up its ground, preparatory to attack. Whilst thus engaged in making its preliminary dispositions for this purpose, it was cannonaded by the Prussian batteries posted on the heights in rear of the village. Girard's division took post on the left of Vandamme's corps, and Domont's light cavalry-division, on the left of Girard.

The centre column, consisting of the 4th corps d'armée, under Gérard, advanced along the Fleurus high road, and took up, somewhat later, a position upon the heights fronting Ligny, and parallel to the general direction of that village; its left being near the Tombe de Ligny, and its right resting on an eminence southward of Mont Potriaux.

The right column, under Grouchy, comprising

16th of June. the cavalry-corps of Pajol and Excelmans, moved by its right, and took post, as did also the light cavalry-division under Lieut. General Morin, belonging to the 4th corps d'armée, on the right of Gérard, and showing front towards the villages of Tongrines, Tongrenelle, Boignée, and Balatre. Grouchy disposed this cavalry so as to protect Gérard from any attempt which the Prussians might make to debouch in his rear from Mont Potriaux or Tongrenelle; as also to watch any hostile movements on their left, and to divert their attention from the centre. Pajol's corps, which was formed on the right, detached along the cross-road which leads to Namur. The villages of Boignée and Balatre, being situated on the French side of the valley, and occupied by Prussian infantry, Grouchy was supplied with two battalions from Gérard's corps. The 1st and 2d squadrons of the 3d Kurmark landwehr-cavalry, belonging to Thielemann's corps, which had been posted in advance, upon the Fleurus road, retired skirmishing until they reached the barrier at the bridge, whither they were pursued by the French cavalry. Here, however, the latter were checked and driven off by the 3d battalion of the 4th Kurmark landwehr, belonging to Colonel von Luck's brigade.

The imperial guard and Milhaud's cuirassiers were halted in reserve, the former on the left, and the latter on the right, of Fleurus.

16th of June.

The numerical strength of the French Emperor's forces prepared to engage with the Prussian army amounted to :—

Infantry	40,985
Cavalry	13,100
Artillery	5,926
Total . .	60,011 with 204 guns.

If to this we add Lobau's corps, which was on the march from Charleroi, the total amount of available force was :—

Infantry	50,885
Cavalry	13,100
Artillery	7,218
Total . .	71,203 with 242 guns.*

The Prussian army in the field amounted to :—

Infantry	73,030
Cavalry	8,150
Artillery	3,437
	84,617
Deduct loss of 1st corps on 15th June	1,200
Total . .	83,417 with 224 guns.†

As soon as the direction of the enemy's movements for attack became sufficiently manifest, Blücher made such further dispositions of his force as appeared to him requisite to meet that attack. He ordered the batteries of the 1st corps d'armée (Zieten's) to be suitably posted for impeding the enemy's advance. The three heavy batteries of the corps

* For detailed return—See Appendix XXV. Loss on 15th June not known; but it was trifling.

† For detailed return—See Appendix XXVI.

16th of June. were immediately drawn up on the height between Ligny and St. Amand. They were supported by the battery of the 1st brigade, posted in rear of St. Amand. Somewhat later, when the direction of attack by Gérard's corps became more developed, the battery of the 3rd brigade was placed on the right of Ligny, near a quarry, and the battery of the 4th brigade on the left of the village, upon the declivity descending to the rivulet. The battery of the 2nd brigade, the foot-battery No. 1, and the horse-battery No. 10, remained in reserve. Of the remaining horse-batteries of the corps, one continued with the cavalry under General von Röder, (which was posted in a hollow, as before stated, between Ligny and Sombref,) and the other was with the 1st Silesian hussars, which regiment had been detached in observation on the right flank of the army, and posted between the northern extremity of the village of Wagnelé and a large pond contiguous to the old Roman road.

By the time the action commenced in front of St. Amand and Ligny—half-past two o'clock—Blücher was satisfied that no necessity existed for any movement of his 3rd corps d'armée to the right; and he therefore ordered it to proceed from the position it had hitherto held in columns upon the two high roads near Sombref, and form the left wing of his line of battle; resting its right upon Sombref, and occupying the heights, at the foot and on the declivities of which are situated

the villages of Mont Potriaux, Tongrines, Tongrenelle, Boignée, Balatre, Vilrets, and Botey. The 9th brigade (General von Borke) was formed in brigade-order in rear of Sombref and northward of the Namur high road, having detached one of its battalions (the 3rd of the 8th regiment) with the foot-battery No. 18, to Mont Potriaux, where the former posted itself on the north, and the latter took up a favourable position on the south, side of the church. The 11th brigade (Colonel von Luck) with the 12-pounder battery No. 7, stood across the Fleurus high road, in front of the junction of the latter with the Namur road upon the height of le Point du Jour, having detached the 3rd battalion of the 4th Kurmark landwehr into the valley, where it occupied the houses in its immediate vicinity. Four battalions of the 10th brigade (Colonel von Kämpfen) were drawn up on the height of Tongrines, resting their right on this village, and having in their front the foot-battery No. 35, and, at a short distance from their left, the horse-battery No. 18. The remaining two battalions of the brigade were detached, the 3rd battalion of the 27th regiment, to occupy Tongrines and the castle of Tongrenelle, and the 3rd battalion of the 2nd Kurmark landwehr, to hold the villages of Boignée and Balatre. The 2nd battalion of the 3rd Kurmark landwehr, belonging to the brigade, as also 2 squadrons of the 6th Kurmark landwehr-cavalry, and 2 squadrons

16th of June.

16th of June. of the 9th hussars, attached to this corps, still continued in the line of outposts in the vicinity of Dinant, to observe Givet; and rejoined on the morning of the 17th of June. The 12th brigade (Colonel von Stulpnagel) with the horse-battery No. 20, was formed in brigade order, in reserve, near the windmill, on the height of le Point du Jour. The reserve-cavalry of this corps, with the horse-battery No. 19, was posted on the extreme left of the position between Botey and Vilrets, whence it detached the 3rd squadron of the 7th uhlans to Onoz, in observation.

This position and the order of battle which was thus developed, were well calculated to answer the object which Blücher had in view, namely, to hold his ground long enough to gain sufficient time for the arrival of at least a portion of Wellington's forces, expected to join the Prussian extreme right by the Namur road; as also, perhaps, for the arrival and co-operation of Bülow's corps, in rear of Thielemann, by the Gembloux road. In either of these cases, if not previously favoured by the circumstances of the general battle about to take place, such a marked accession to his strength would enable him to assume the offensive, whilst, in the first mentioned, Wellington would effectually prevent a junction between Napoleon's and Ney's forces.

The position had been long before selected, and the whole of the ground had even been surveyed,

with a view to meet the contingency which had now actually occurred; but then it must be remembered, that in this design the co-operation of the 4th corps d'armée was fully contemplated, whereas the latter had now become a doubtful question: and hence it was that Blücher was led to place more reliance upon a direct support from Wellington than would otherwise have been the case. To accept a battle, notwithstanding the absence of Bülow's corps, was undoubtedly the wisest course. The enemy's force in the field did not appear to exceed that of the Prussians; and therefore, considering the nature of the position, the contest would, in all probability, become protracted, perhaps until the arrival of Bülow, perhaps also, until the close of day, without any distinct advantage being gained by either party. In the former case, the required preponderance might instantly give a decidedly favourable turn to the scale; in the latter, the junction of the 4th corps during the night would enable Blücher on the following morning to attack his opponent with every prospect of success, and either to relieve Wellington, if necessary, from any pressure in his front, or so to combine his further operations with those of the British commander, should the latter have held his ground and concentrated his army, as to lead to the complete overthrow of both Napoleon's and Ney's forces. To have declined the contest, and retired so as to effect a junction with his 4th corps,

16th of June.

16th of June.

he must still, if he wished to act in close concert with Wellington, have abandoned his direct communications with the Meuse and the Rhine, whence he drew all his supplies; a result which might as well be trusted to the chances of a battle. These considerations were also, in all probability, strongly seconded by a desire on the part of the Prussian commander, and one perfectly in keeping with his ardent character, to take every possible measure which was at all warranted by the actual posture of affairs, for vigorously opposing Napoleon's advance.

In a tactical point of view, the position was undoubtedly defective. Nearly the entire of the ground situated between the line of villages of Ligny, St. Amand, and Wagnelé, and the great Namur road, was exposed to the view of the enemy; and as there was every probability of a protracted village-fight along the front of the position, the supports and reserves required to maintain a contest of that nature, would necessarily be subjected to the full play of the batteries on the opposite heights. Upon the space above mentioned every movement could be detected from the French side, where, on the contrary, the undulations were such as to admit of the concealment of the disposition of considerable masses of troops. The defect in this respect was subsequently made strikingly manifest, by the fact that the gradual weakening of the Prussian centre, for the purpose of reinforcing the right, was

closely observed by Napoleon, who took advantage of the insight thus obtained into his opponent's designs, by collecting in rear of the heights of Ligny that force with which, when he saw that the Prussians had no reserve remaining, he so suddenly assailed and broke the centre of their line. 16th of June.

Napoleon's dispositions having been completed, the battle commenced, about half-past two o'clock, with an attack upon the village of St. Amand, by Lieut. General Lefol's division of Vandamme's corps. The attack, which was made in three columns, proved successful; the three battalions of the 29th Prussian regiment which defended it, were compelled, after a stout resistance, to yield to greatly superior numbers, and were driven out of the village. General von Steinmetz, whose brigade was posted in rear of St. Amand, pushed forward all the sharpshooters of the 12th and 24th regiments to their support. These, however, being unable to make head against the enemy, who already made a disposition to debouch from the village, the 12th and 24th regiments were led forward to renew the contest. In the mean time, just as the French appeared at the outlet of the village, a shower of grape and canister was poured right down amongst them from the foot-battery No. 7. Immediately upon this, both battalions of the 12th regiment descended into the ravine, rushed upon the inclosures, and, driving the enemy's shattered infantry before them, regained

16th of June. possession of the village. The 24th regiment, advancing by wings of battalions—the one in line and the other in column of reserve respectively—supported this attack upon the left, and established itself in the lower part of St. Amand.

In the course of this short prelude, the batteries ranged along the little eminences which rose on either side of the valley of the Ligny, opened a furious cannonade along the whole extent of the front lines of the contending armies. Ligny, as also St. Amand, (when repossessed by the Prussians,) both of which lay so directly under the French guns, seemed devoted to destruction. Their defenders, sheltered in a great degree by stone walls, hollow-ways, and banked-up hedges, appeared perfectly motionless while the deluge of shot and shell poured fast and thick around them; but no sooner did those in Ligny discover a dusky mass emerging from the clouds of smoke which enveloped the heights above them, and wending its course downwards upon the lower portion of the village, than they rushed out of their concealment, and, lining with their advanced skirmishers the outermost inclosures, prepared to meet the onset which would probably bring them into closer contact with their enemies, and lead to a struggle in which physical strength and innate courage, combined with individual skill and dexterity, might effect a result unattainable by a recourse to projectiles alone. It was the 2d battalion of the

19th Prussian regiment, which, issuing from its cover, where it had stood in column, rapidly deployed, and, by a well-directed volley, shook the advancing mass, which it then threw into disorder by following up this advantage with a well-sustained fire. Twice was this attack repeated on the part of Gérard's troops, but with a similar result. A second column now advanced against the centre of the village, and shortly afterwards a third was launched against the upper part of it, near the old castle; but their attempts to penetrate within its precincts proved equally futile, and the four Prussian battalions of Henkel's brigade gallantly maintained the post of Ligny. As the French column withdrew, their batteries played with redoubled energy upon the village, and fresh columns prepared for another assault. 16th of June.

The troops of Vandamme's corps renewed the attack upon St. Amand with the utmost vigour, and forcing back the 12th and 24th Prussian regiments, which suffered most severely, penetrated into the village, where the fight became obstinate, and the fire most destructive. Steinmetz had only two more battalions of his brigade remaining at his disposal—the 1st and 3d battalions of the 1st Westphalian landwehr—and these he pushed forward into the village, to restore confidence to the defenders, whose numbers were so fearfully reduced, and, if possible, to stem the progress of the assailants. They had scarcely got

16th of June. fairly into action, however, when their commanding officers were wounded, and both battalions gave way before the furious onset of the French, the 3d battalion leaving numbers of its men killed, along the outlets of the village. The whole brigade, which, within a short period, had suffered a loss of 46 officers and 2,300 men, having rallied in rear of St. Amand, retired into position between Bry and Sombref, and the three battalions which had first occupied the village, marched to rejoin the 3d brigade, whilst the loud shouts of "*Vive l'Empereur!*" which immediately followed the cessation of the sharp rattle of the musketry, heard even amidst the incessant thunder of the artillery, proclaimed the triumph of the French infantry.

In the mean time, another assault was made upon Ligny, whose defenders had been reinforced by the two remaining battalions of Henkel's brigade. The French now changed their mode of attack. They advanced simultaneously against the centre, with the view of gaining the church-yard, and against the lower end of the village, in order to turn the left flank of the defenders; and taking advantage of the unusually great height of the corn, their line of skirmishers, strengthened by whole battalions so as to give it a decided superiority over that of the Prussians, approached so cautiously and silently as to continue unperceived until they suddenly possessed themselves of the

outermost hedges and gardens. A hand-to-hand contest ensued, and the Prussians, pressed in front by superior numbers, and taken in flank at the same time, were forced to yield. Presently, however, stimulated by the combined exertions of the commanding officers, Majors Count von Gröben, von Kuylenstierna, and von Rex, they recovered themselves, rallied, and again faced their enemies. 16th of June.

The battle, on this part of the field, now presented an awfully grand and animating spectacle, and the hopes of both parties were raised to the highest state of excitement. Intermingled with the quick but irregular discharge of small arms throughout the whole extent of the village, came forth alternately the cheering "*En avant!*" and exulting "*Vive l'Empereur!*" as also the emphatic "*Vorwärts!*" and the wild "*Hourrah!*" whilst the batteries along the heights, continuing their terrific roar, plunged destruction into the masses seen descending on either side to join in the desperate struggle in the valley, out of which there now arose, from the old castle of Ligny, volumes of dark, thick smoke, succeeded by brilliant flames, imparting additional sublimity to the scene.

The Prussians gradually gained ground, and then pressing forward upon all points of the village, succeeded in clearing it of the French, who, in retreating, abandoned two guns which had been moved close down to the principal outlet on that side. General von Jagow's brigade (the 3d)

16th of June. had made a change of front to its left, and approached the village; the 3d battalions of both the 7th and 29th regiments had been detached to the right, to protect the foot-batteries Nos. 3 and 8, and to remain in reserve; the four remaining battalions descended into the village as a reinforcement.

Beyond an occasional cannonading, the action on the eastern side of the field, between the corps of Grouchy and of Thielemann, was comparatively languid, being limited to a contest, varied in its results, for the possession of the village of Boignée, and, subsequently, of those houses of Tongrines which were situated along the bottom of the valley, as also to some skilful manœuvring on the part of Grouchy with his cavalry, with a view of menacing the Prussian left.

In the mean time, the French maintained possession of St. Amand, but Zieten's 12-pounder batteries, which were now moved forward, presented a formidable obstruction to their debouching from that village. Napoleon directed General Girard, on the extreme left, to take possession, with his division, of St. Amand-la-haye, and this operation having been successfully accomplished, gave the French the advantage of outflanking from thence any attack upon St. Amand itself. Blücher ordered General von Pirch II. to retake this village; whereupon the latter advanced with his brigade from the height of Bry, and withdrew

the 1st battalion of the 6th regiment from the windmill of Bussy, which was then occupied by the 2d battalion of the 23d regiment (8th brigade) and near to which the 1st Westphalian landwehr-cavalry remained during the whole of the action. At the same time, the Prussian chief, fully sensible of the very critical position in which he would be placed, were the French, following up the advantages they had already gained upon his right, to debouch from St. Amand and St. Amand-la-haye, in sufficient force to overpower Zieten's corps, and thus cut off his communication with Wellington, he decided upon occupying the village of Wagnelé, whence repeated attacks might be directed against the enemy's left flank; and, with this view, he desired General von Pirch I. who commanded the 2d corps, to detach the 5th brigade (General von Tippelskirchen's) to the latter village, and to place it under the orders of General von Jürgass, who was also sent to that part of the field, with Lieut. Colonel von Sohr's brigade of cavalry, (consisting of the 3d Brandenburg, and 5th Pomeranian, hussars,) together with two squadrons of the 6th Neumark dragoons, and the horse-battery No. 6. Colonel von der Marwitz, of Thielemann's corps, was also ordered to join these troops with two regiments of his brigade, the 7th and 8th uhlans. The brigade of General von Brause, (the 7th,) which had been rejoined by detached battalions, was pushed forward as far as the Roman

16th of June.

16th of June. road, to occupy the position vacated by the advance of General von Tippelskirchen's brigade, to which it was to act as a support in case of necessity.

It was four o'clock when General von Pirch II. who had formed his brigade for the attack of St. Amand-la-haye, having his left flank protected by the 12th regiment which had re-assembled in rear of St. Amand, moved his front line against the former village. As it advanced, however, its ranks were dreadfully shattered by the fire from the French artillery, nor were they less thinned by that of the musketry as they entered the village; and such was the determined resistance on the part of the French, that they were unable to penetrate beyond the centre of the village; and though reinforced by the 1st battalion of the 6th regiment, from the second line, they found it quite impracticable to drive the enemy out of a large building which was surrounded by a stone wall, and which formed the point of connection between the two villages. The Prussians having got into great disorder, and being closely pressed by the French, were compelled to abandon the village, in order to collect their scattered remnants, and to re-form. General Girard, whose division had, under his own immediate guidance, so gallantly maintained the village, fell mortally wounded on this occasion.

Blücher now decided on a renewed attack upon St. Amand-la-haye, in order to occupy the front

of Girard's division, while he should carry into effect his previously projected movement against the enemy's left flank; and, anxious to ensure the due execution of his instructions and to direct the attacks himself, he repaired in person to this part of the field. General von Tippelskirchen's brigade, having advanced along the Roman road, was already formed in brigade order, in rear of Wagnelé, while Jürgass had posted his cavalry more to the left, and opposite to the interval between that village and St. Amand-la-haye, whence he could with considerable advantage fall upon the enemy, should the latter venture to debouch in that direction. 16th of June.

These movements did not escape the watchful eye of Napoleon, who detached a division of the young guard and a battery of the same corps in support of his left wing, as also General Colbert's brigade of lancers from Count Pajol's corps, to reinforce the cavalry on the left, and to preserve the communication with Ney.

When all was ready for the attack, Blücher, who felt how much depended on its result, galloped up to the leading battalions, and thus earnestly and impassionately ordered the advance:—"Now, lads, behave well! don't suffer the '*grande nation*' again to rule over you! Forward! In God's name—forward!"* Instantly his devoted followers

* "Kinder, haltet Euch brav! lasst die Nation nicht wieder Herr über Euch werden! Vorwärts—vorwärts in Gottes namen!"

16th of June. rent the air with their re-echoing shouts of "*Vorwärts!*" Nothing could surpass the undaunted resolution and intrepid mien which Pirch's battalions displayed as they advanced against, and entered, St. Amand-la-haye, at a charging pace; they completely swept the enemy before them, while Major von Quadt, who commanded the 28th regiment, supported by some detachments of the 2nd regiment (from Tippelskirchen's brigade) gained possession of the great building. The 1st battalion of the 6th regiment, after having forced its way right across the village, sallied forth from the opposite side, in pursuit of the enemy, with a degree of impetuosity which its officers had the utmost difficulty in restraining, while numbers of the men were on the point of plunging into the very midst of the French reserves. The cavalry on the right of the village seemed to have caught up the intrepid spirit and enthusiastic devotion of the infantry, and, as if impatient to join in the struggle, a squadron of the Brandenburg uhlans supported the attack of the village by a charge upon the enemy's cavalry; after which, the remainder of this regiment, with the 1st Kurmark landwehr-cavalry, advanced under General von Treskow, into the plain on the left of the village, of which the whole contour now bristled with the bayonets of the 46th regiment, while the 28th regiment held the post of the great building, which it had so gallantly carried, and the 2d West-

phalian landwehr stood in second line, as a reserve. 16th of June.

So completely absorbed was the attention of the 12-pounder battery No. 6, which stood in a somewhat isolated position, by the contest in St. Amand-la-haye, which it covered by its fire, that it had not noticed the stealthy advance of a troop of the enemy's horsemen, wearing the uniform of the light artillery of the guard, and most unexpectedly found itself attacked in flank by these bold adventurers. This gave rise to a curious scene, for the Prussian gunners, in the first moment of surprise, could only defend themselves with their rammers and handspikes, but with these they plied the intruders with so much adroitness and resolution as to hurl their leaders to the ground, and force the remainder to betake themselves to a hasty flight.

Prince Blücher had, in the mean time, on perceiving Colberg's French lancers hovering upon, and stretching out beyond, his extreme right, ordered General von Pirch to detach two more cavalry regiments—the Queen's dragoons and the 4th Kurmark landwehr-cavalry—as a reinforcement to the cavalry of Zieten's corps.

The nearly simultaneous attack upon Wagnelé by Tippelskirchen's brigade, previously mentioned as having taken post in rear of that village, was not attended with an equal degree of success. The 1st and 2d battalions of the 25th regiment advanced in column through the centre of Wag-

16th of June.

nelé ; but on debouching, the 2d battalion, which led the advance, was suddenly assailed by a fire from the French skirmishers who lay concealed in the high corn. Although its order was thus considerably disturbed, it succeeded, nevertheless, in effecting its deployment. The 1st battalion also deployed, but, in doing so, its left wing covered the right of the second battalion ; and while executing a second movement, intended to clear the front of the latter, the French battalions pressing forward, drove in the Prussian skirmishers upon the regiment, which consisted mostly of young soldiers ; when, notwithstanding the conspicuously meritorious exertions of all their officers, they were overthrown and dispersed in such a manner that it became impracticable to lead them back into action in any other way than by separate detachments. The 3d battalion of this regiment shared nearly the same fate ; for, having plunged into the high corn, it received a volley which disordered its ranks, and killed its three senior officers ; and although it maintained for some time a fire in return, it was eventually compelled to retire, as were also the 1st and 2d battalions of the 5th Westphalian landwehr, under precisely similar circumstances. The brigade was re-formed, under the protection of the 2d Prussian regiment, which now advanced from the reserve, boldly encountered the enemy, and, aided by the efficacious fire of the foot-battery No. 10, stemmed the further progress

of the French, and thus gained time for the remaining battalions to re-form in rear of Wagnelé. Upon the advance, however, of a French column towards its left flank, it fell back as far as the entrance into the village. 16th of June.

The French now renewed their attacks upon St. Amand-la-haye, and made their appearance simultaneously in front and in both flanks of that village. The fight again became desperate. Pirch's brigade had, however, exhausted both its ammunition and its strength, when Blücher pushed forward the 3d battalion of the 23d regiment (from the 8th brigade—Colonel von Langen's), and soon afterwards the 3d battalion of the 9th regiment, together with the whole of the 26th regiment (from the 6th brigade—General von Krafft's), whereupon General von Pirch withdrew his battalions, which had suffered so severely, to the rear of Bry. The foot-battery No. 3, belonging to Pirch's brigade, had at an earlier period moved to its left, and had taken up a position near the quarries on the right of Ligny, by the side of the foot-battery No. 8, of Jagow's brigade.

While the struggle in the villages in front of the right of the Prussian position continue to wear an indecisive and unsettled aspect, let us return for a moment to Ligny, which we left in possession of Count Henkel's 4th Prussian brigade, supported by the 3rd brigade under General von Jagow.

16th of June.

The 1st and 2nd battalions of the 7th regiment (of Jagow's brigade) were ordered to traverse the village, and to advance in column against the enemy. Just as they debouched, they found in their immediate front, several French battalions, in close column, moving directly against the village. Both parties at once came to a halt; the Prussians without being able to deploy in the defile, and the French without attempting to do so, probably unwilling to lose the time which such a movement would require. A fire of musketry commenced which lasted half an hour, and caused much loss. Other battalions now hastened across the village, but all at once a rumour flew rapidly among them, that the French were in possession of the church-yard, and in a moment several muskets were aimed in that direction, and either thoughtlessly or nervously discharged. Those battalions that were in front, at the outlet of the village, became alarmed by this unexpected firing in their rear. At the same time, a discharge of grape, from some guns suddenly brought forward by the French, in their immediate front, augmented their confusion, and forced them to a retreat. They were closely pursued by the enemy, whose skirmishers made a dash at the colour of the 2nd battalion of the 7th regiment, which they would have captured but for the noble and determined gallantry with which it was defended.

General von Krafft, from whose brigade (the

6th) five battalions had already been detached, namely, four for the defence of St. Amand-la-Haye, and one in aid of that of Ligny, now received Blücher's order with his remaining four battalions, (the 1st and 2nd of the 9th, and the 1st and 3rd of the 1st Elbe landwehr,) to drive the enemy out of the latter village. The foot-battery No. 15, was posted between the left of Ligny and the Bois-du-loup, and the foot-battery No. 37, was directed towards St. Amand. The other batteries posted between Ligny and St. Amand received orders to retire accordingly as they expended their ammunition, for the purpose of refitting; and they were successively relieved by the foot-battery No. 1, the horse-battery No. 10, and the 12-pounder batteries Nos. 4 and 8. The horse-battery No. 14 was advanced across the stream between Ligny and Sombref, and took post on the other side of the valley, where it was much exposed to the enemy's fire, and lost 19 gunners and 53 horses. 16th of June.

General von Krafft moved forward, in the first instance, only two battalions, and kept the others in reserve; but all of them soon became engaged; for the French, though driven back at first, received considerable reinforcements.

The fight throughout the whole village of Ligny was now at the hottest: the place was literally crammed with the combatants, and its streets and inclosures were choked up with the wounded, the

16th of June. dying, and the dead: every house that had escaped being set on fire, was the scene of a desperate struggle: the troops fought no longer in combined order, but in numerous and irregular groups, separated by houses either in flames, or held as little forts, sometimes by the one, and sometimes by the other party; and in various instances, when their ammunition failed, or when they found themselves suddenly assailed from different sides, the bayonet, and even the butt, supplied them with the ready means for prosecuting the dreadful carnage with unmitigated fury. The entire village was concealed in smoke; but the incessant rattle of the musketry, the crashing of burning timbers, the smashing of doors and gateways, the yells and imprecations of the combatants, which were heard through that misty veil, gave ample indication to the troops posted in reserve upon the heights, of the fierce and savage nature of the struggle beneath. In the mean time, the relieving batteries on the Prussian side, which had arrived quite fresh from the rear, came into full play, as did also a reinforcement, on the French side, from the artillery of the imperial guard. The earth now trembled under the tremendous cannonade; and as the flames, issuing from the numerous burning houses, intermingled with dense volumes of smoke, shot directly upwards through the light-grey mass which rendered the village indistinguishable, and seemed continually to thicken, the scene resembled

for a time some violent convulsion of nature, rather than a human conflict—as if the valley had been rent asunder, and Ligny had become the focus of a burning crater. 16th of June.

Long did this fierce and deadly strife continue without any material advance being made on either side. At length the French gained possession of a large house, as also of the churchyard, into which they brought forward two pieces of cannon. General von Jagow vainly endeavoured with the 7th regiment to retake this house. The 1st battalion of the 3rd Westphalian landwehr displayed the most inflexible perseverance in its endeavours to drive the French out again from the churchyard: it made three unsuccessful attempts to cross an intervening ditch, and subsequently tried to gain a hollow-way, which lay in the flank of that post, but falling upon the French reinforcements that were advancing towards it, they were compelled to abandon the enterprise.

Fresh victims were still required to satiate the "king of terrors," who might be said to hold a gala-day in this "valley of death." Blücher had ordered Colonel von Langen's brigade (the 8th) to follow in succession that of General von Krafft. The position vacated by the former, in front of Sombref, was taken up by Colonel von Stulpnagel's brigade (the 12th) of Thielemann's corps, and the chain of skirmishers of the latter brigade extended along the rivulet as far as Ligny. As

16th of June. soon as Colonel von Langen had reached the immediate vicinity of Ligny, he posted the 1st and 2nd battalions of the 21st regiment upon an eminence near the village, and the foot-battery No. 12, covered by two squadrons of the 5th Kurmark landwehr-cavalry, upon the left of the road leading to Ligny. The 21st regiment made no less than six different attacks, partly in conjunction with the other troops that fought in Ligny, and partly isolated, without succeeding in disturbing the position of the enemy in that portion of the village which lies on the right bank of the Ligny. Colonel von Langen, observing the increased fury and obstinacy of the fight in Ligny, detached thither also the 1st battalion of the 23rd regiment, and the second of the 3rd Elbe landwehr: he then took up a position, with the remainder of his brigade, near the mill of Bussy, into which he threw the 2nd battalion of the 23rd regiment. The 1st battalion of this corps, having formed two columns, rushed into the village, and, after crossing the stream, received a sharp fire from the windows of the houses on the opposite side. The left column of the battalion stormed a farm-house, of which, after it had burst in the gates with hatchets, it gained possession, and thus protected the advance of the right column. At this moment, Napoleon's final and decisive attack commenced on this point; but previously to entering upon an account of it, it will be necessary

to resume the narrative of the contest along the remainder of the line of battle. 16th of June.

On the right, Tippelskirchen's brigade (the 5th) was ordered to renew the attack upon St. Amand-la-haye, and, as an auxiliary movement, a bold push was to be made upon the group of houses in rear of that village, and of Wagnelé, called the Hameau de St. Amand. Both of the 3rd battalions of the 2nd and 25th regiments, under Major von Witzleben, advanced against the latter point, while the 1st and 2nd battalions of the 2nd regiment, the 3rd battalion of the 5th Westphalian landwehr, and a battalion of the 25th regiment made a direct attack upon St. Amand-la-haye. Both movements were supported by the foot-batteries Nos. 10 and 37, and Colonel von Thümen was detached, with the Silesian uhlans, and the 11th hussars, to cover the right of the brigade: the 1st and 2nd squadrons of the 5th Kurmark landwehr-cavalry were posted in reserve. The 3rd battalion of the 2nd regiment opened the attack upon the Hameau de St. Amand, and being well protected on their right by the 11th hussars, carried it by storm. The French appeared determined to regain this point, which from its position, was, in fact, the key to the defence of the three villages of St. Amand, St. Amand-la-haye, and Wagnelé, and the struggle for its possession was most obstinate and sanguinary. All the battalions of Tippelskirchen's brigade became successively

16th of June. engaged. Four times was St. Amand-la-haye lost and retaken by the 2nd regiment, which suffered severely. General Jürgass ordered forward the horse-battery No. 6, on the right of which the foot-battery No. 10 then took post. The Silesian uhlans and the 11th hussars suffered considerably from their exposure to the enemy's artillery. Colonel von Thümen was killed at their head, by a cannon-shot, and was succeeded by Lieut. Colonel von Schmiedeberg, who ordered both these regiments to make a change of front to the right; when the Prussian lancers dashed forward to meet the advance of a French regiment, which they completely defeated, and having followed up the attack with a vigorous pursuit, fell all at once among the enemy's reserves; but they immediately recovered themselves, and rallied with great celerity, order, and precision.

About this time, the light cavalry-brigade of Colonel von Marwitz, already mentioned as having been ordered from the left, reached the right flank, and was formed up in two lines: also the four battalions that had been detached from General von Krafft's brigade, arrived upon the right of St. Amand-la-haye, and came into action. The battle on both sides on this part of the field continued to rage with unabated violence, and with such indefatigable ardour did the Prussians continue the struggle, that when the fire of their infantry-skirmishers was observed to slacken, from the men

having expended their ammunition, the soldiers of the 11th hussars rushed into the midst of them, and supplied them with such cartridges as they had of their own; an act of devotion to which many of them fell a sacrifice. General von Jürgass ordered forward the brigade (7th) of General von Brause in support of that of General von Tippelskirchen, which had suffered a very severe loss. When General von Brause had, at an earlier period, taken post at the Trois Burettes, upon Tippelskirchen advancing from that point to Wagnelé, (as previously explained,) he stationed both the 3rd battalions of the 14th and 22nd regiments upon an eminence on the left of the high road, for the purpose of keeping up the communication with Tippelskirchen; and he pushed on the other two battalions of the 14th regiment towards Bry, that they might be nearer at hand, if required, for the contest in the villages of Wagnelé and St. Amand-la-haye, while the two squadrons of the Elbe landwehr-cavalry, attached to his brigade, kept a look-out upon both sides of the road. These two battalions, thus posted, caught the eye of Blücher as he looked round for the nearest available force, and he immediately ordered them to advance and join in the contest; and General von Brause, on being made acquainted with this disposition, led forward the 3rd battalions of the 14th and 22nd regiments, and the 1st battalion of the 2nd Elbe landwehr, while the four remaining

16th of June.

16th of June. battalions of his brigade, making a change of front to their left, formed up, in reserve, in rear of the Namur road. On approaching the more immediate scene of the action, General von Brause came upon the 3rd battalion of the 9th regiment, which had expended all its ammunition: he procured for it a fresh supply, and ordered it to return into the village, along with the 2nd battalion of the 14th regiment; while the 1st battalion of this regiment threw itself into St. Amand-la-haye, and relieved the 2nd regiment, which now retired, as did also the remainder of Tippelskirchen's brigade to the rear of Wagnelé, where it re-formed.

Here, in these villages on the right, as well as at Ligny, the fight never slackened for a moment: fresh masses, from both sides, poured into the burning villages as often as the fearfully diminished numbers and dreadfully exhausted state of the combatants rendered relief imperatively necessary: partial successes on different points were constantly met by corresponding reverses on others; and so equally were the courage, the energies, and the devotion of both parties balanced, that the struggle between them appeared, from its unabated vigour, likely to continue until the utter exhaustion of the one should yield the triumph to the greater command of reserves possessed by the other. The anxiety at that time on the part of Blücher for the arrival of either a portion of

Wellington's forces, or Bülow's corps, was extreme; and frequently, as he cheered forward his men in their advance to take part in the contest, did he address them with the exhortation, "Forward, lads! we must do something before the English join us!" In fact, his only reserve remaining was the 9th brigade (General von Borcke's), the withdrawal of which would greatly expose his centre; and Napoleon, who had already entertained a suspicion that such was the case, resolved upon terminating the sanguinary combat in the valley, by boldly advancing a portion of his own intact reserves, consisting of the guard and Lobau's corps (which had just arrived and was posted on the right of Fleurus) against the Prussian centre. 16th of June.

For the execution of his project the French Emperor destined the imperial guard, with Milhaud's corps of cuirassiers in support. He wished to conceal this movement as much as possible from the enemy, and caused it to be made to the right, along the rear of the corps of Gérard, a portion of whose batteries were ordered to be withdrawn, for the purpose both of affording greater protection to the guard, by diverting the enemy's fire to other points, and of deceiving him as to the real object of the movement, if observed previously to the actual execution of the Emperor's design.

This far-famed band of veteran warriors, and Milhaud's splendid corps of mailed cuirassiers,

16th of June. were in full march towards the lower extremity of Ligny, where they were to cross the stream, when, all at once, they were halted by an order direct from the Emperor, who had decided upon suspending the movement, until he should ascertain the result of an incident that had occurred upon his extreme left, and which had placed him for the time in considerable doubt and anxiety respecting its real nature. He had received a message from Vandamme, informing him that a strong column, composed of infantry, cavalry, and artillery, was advancing towards Fleurus; that it had at first been looked upon as the corps detached from Ney's forces, until it was discovered that it moved by a different road from that along which those troops had been expected, and in a direction towards the French left rear, instead of the Prussian extreme right; that Girard's division had been consequently induced to fall back, and take up a position to cover Fleurus; and that the effect produced upon his own corps by the sudden appearance of this column was such, that if His Majesty did not immediately move his reserve to arrest its progress, his troops would be compelled to evacuate St. Amand and commence a retreat. This intelligence could not fail to create alarm in the mind of the French Emperor, who concluded that the corps in question had been detached against his rear, as a diversion in favour of Blücher, from the army of Wellington, who had probably ob-

tained some signal triumph over Ney. Another officer arrived from Vandamme, reiterating the account previously given. Napoleon instantly gave the order for the halt of the imperial guard; and despatched one of his aides-de-camp to reconnoitre the strength and disposition of the column, and to discover the object of its movement. 16th of June.

The commencement of the march of the imperial guard and Milhaud's cuirassier-corps towards Ligny, had been conducted with so much skill, and the manœuvring of these troops at one point in their line of march to shelter themselves from the fire of the Prussian batteries, to which they had become suddenly exposed, bore so much the appearance of a retrograde movement, accompanied as it was by the withdrawal of a portion of the guns of Gérard's corps, that the Prussians were completely deceived by it. Intelligence was hastily conveyed to Blücher that the enemy was retreating; whereupon he ordered the march of all the remaining disposable battalions of Colonel von Langen's brigade (the 8th) upon St. Amand, to enable him to take advantage of the circumstance by pressing upon the enemy's left.

In the mean time, Colonel von Marwitz had been menaced by the advance of a considerable line of cavalry and a battery, which latter annoyed him but little. This cavalry did not, however, seem much disposed to risk a close encounter: once it put forward a detachment, which was overthrown by

16th of June. two squadrons of the 7th and 8th uhlans, and then a regiment of French chasseurs à cheval fell upon the skirmishers of the 2nd regiment of infantry, but was driven back by two squadrons of the 5th Kurmark landwehr-cavalry. Colonel von Marwitz had been ordered by General von Jürgass to send out patroles in different directions from the right flank, for the purpose of seeking out the commu nication with the Duke of Wellington's forces. These brought in prisoners, from whom it was ascertained that a whole French corps, the 1st, under Count d'Erlon, was in that vicinity. Subsequently French cavalry was perceived between Mellet and Villers Perruin; whereupon Colonel von Marwitz, who had been reinforced by two squadrons of the Pomeranian hussars, ordered a change of front of his brigade in this direction, then deployed his eight squadrons in two lines, with considerable intervals, and withdrew them, alternately, towards the high road; followed, though not vigorously, by three French regiments of cavalry and a battery, comprising Jaquinot's light cavalry-brigade, attached to d'Erlon's corps.* As he approached the chaussée, the 2nd and 3rd battalions of the 2nd Elbe-landwehr, as also the 3rd battalion of the 22nd regiment advanced to his support.

Until about six o'clock the action along that

* See page 159.

part of the line which extended from Sombref to Balatre, had not been carried on with any degree of energy, and the occupation of the opposing forces was generally limited to mutual observation. Now, however, the French infantry (of which only a small portion was attached to Grouchy's cavalry) penetrated as far as the precincts of the village of Tongrines; but Colonel von Kämpfen's brigade, (the 10th,) having been successively reinforced by all the battalions of Colonel von Luck's brigade (the 11th) excepting one which was left in reserve, the French were easily repulsed, and the Prussians maintained full possession of all this portion of their original position. 16th of June.

It was about seven o'clock when the aide-de-camp* returned from his reconnaissance, and reported to Napoleon that the column in the distance which had caused so much uneasiness proved to be d'Erlon's corps; that Girard's division, upon being undeceived, had resumed its position in the line of battle; and that Vandamme's corps had maintained its ground. This movement of d'Erlon's corps admits of being satisfactorily explained. Napoleon, having received information that d'Erlon had been left in reserve in front of Gosselies, and inferring, perhaps, from this circumstance that Ney was sufficiently strong to be

* There is reason to believe that it was General Labedoyère. It was certainly not General Dejean, as stated in the "Mémoires de Napoléon," livre IX.

16th of June. able to hold his ground at Quatre-Bras, without further aid than what he had at hand, resolved upon employing this corps against the Prussian right flank; but in the mean time, d'Erlon had, in pursuance of instructions from Ney, continued his march towards Quatre-Bras; and having himself proceeded in advance, had reached Frasne, at which place Colonel Laurent found him, and communicated to him the Emperor's order for the march of his corps upon St. Amand; adding that on coming up with the head of his column, he had taken upon himself to change its direction of march into that of St. Amand. D'Erlon hastened to comply with Napoleon's wishes, and despatched General d'Elcambre, his chief of the staff, to make known the movement to Marshal Ney. His route from Frasne towards St. Amand, the point prescribed by the order, lay through Villers-Perruin, and the movement was altogether one of a retrograde nature. Hence the direction taken by the column, as seen in the distance, was well calculated to alarm the troops of the French extreme left; as also to excite surprise in the mind of Napoleon, who, having formed no expectation of the arrival of any French troops in the field by any other direction than that from Gosselies upon St. Amand, or perhaps from Quatre-Bras upon Bry, also participated in the opinion that the column in question, under its attendant circumstances and general disposition, could be no other

than that of an enemy. As d'Erlon debouched from Villers-Perruin, and advanced upon the prescribed point, St. Amand, he threw out his cavalry (Jaquinot's) to his left, for the protection of this flank; and it was before this cavalry that the Prussian brigade, under Colonel von Marwitz, retired in the manner already explained, a movement which fully restored confidence to Girard's division. All at once this column was observed to halt, to indicate an indecision in its intentions, and finally to withdraw from the field. D'Erlon had in fact just received from Ney a peremptory order to join him without delay, with which he resolved to comply, probably concluding that he was bound to do so from the circumstance of his having been in the first instance placed under the Marshal's immediate command; having ascertained also from the Emperor's aide-de-camp that he was not the bearer of any instructions whatever from Napoleon as to his future movements, and that the appearance of his corps upon that part of the field of battle had been quite unexpected. This pressing order had been despatched by Ney immediately previous to the arrival of Colonel Laurent on the heights of Gemioncourt. 16th of June.

If the first appearance of this column had caused alarm and perplexity among the troops of the French left wing, the apprehensions it excited on the Prussian right, when its cavalry was observed to advance and to drive back Colonel von

16th of June. Marwitz's brigade, which had been sent towards it *en reconnaissance*, (as already explained,) were still greater; and its equally unexpected disappearance, (with the exception of its cavalry, and a portion of its infantry,) at a moment when it was felt that its vigorous co-operation must have rendered the issue of the battle no longer doubtful, was looked upon as a particularly fortunate turn of affairs; and Blücher's hopes revived as he prepared to carry into effect his meditated attack upon the French left flank.

There did not appear on the part of Napoleon any eagerness to resume the movement of the imperial guard towards the lower extremity of Ligny, but rather an anxiety to await calmly the most favourable moment for his projected attack. Doubtless he had discovered the march of the remaining battalions of Colonel von Langen's brigade, from Sombref towards St. Amand, as a further reinforcement to the Prussian right, and calculated upon paralysing the attack which Blücher was evidently preparing against his left flank, by executing a sudden and vigorous assault on the Prussian centre with a preponderating mass of fresh troops. At length, towards eight o'clock, the Emperor gave the order for the guard and Milhaud's corps of cuirassiers to resume their march. The same precautions were observed as before for masking the movement as much as possible, and so successfully, that Thielemann, on

observing a French battery opposite Tongrines entirely withdrawn, and Grouchy's lines of cavalry presenting a diminished extent of front, and conceiving at the same time, that the contest in Ligny was assuming a change favourable to the Prussians, concluded that the moment had then arrived in which an attack might be made, with every probability of success, upon the right flank of the enemy. He had only one brigade remaining of the cavalry of his corps, namely, that of Colonel Count Lottum; the other brigade, under Colonel von Marwitz, having been, as already explained, for some time detached to the extreme right of the Prussian army. General von Hobe, who commanded this cavalry-division, had previously moved forward Count Lottum's brigade, and posted it in rear of Colonel von Kämpfen's infantry-brigade. Thielemann now desired him to advance with Lottum's brigade and the horse-battery No. 19, along the Fleurus high road. In carrying this order into effect, General von Hobe posted the battery, in the first instance, close to the 12-pounder battery No. 7, which stood across the Fleurus high road, about midway between the junction of the latter with the Namur road and the bridge over the Ligny. A cannonade was opened from this point upon the French guns on the opposite height, to which the latter replied with great spirit, and one of the guns of the battery was dismounted. The remaining guns were

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now advanced rapidly along the high road, preceded by two squadrons of the 7th dragoons: on getting into position, two of the guns continued upon the road itself, on which the French had also posted two pieces, but scarcely had the squadrons formed up, and the battery fired a few rounds, when they were furiously attacked by the 5th and 13th French dragoons of Excelmans' cavalry-corps: in an instant they were thrown into confusion; the two guns upon the road escaped, while the remainder fell into the hands of the French dragoons, who closely pursued the Prussians.

General von Borcke (commanding the 9th brigade) observing this mêlée upon the Fleurus road, immediately pushed forward the 1st and 3rd battalions of the 1st Kurmark landwehr, and posted them in rear of the hedges and walls running parallel with the high road, so as to flank the enemy's cavalry: the 2nd battalion of the same regiment followed the movement, and was finally stationed upon the road. In order to support these battalions, and to preserve the communication with Colonel von Stülpnagel's brigade (the 12th) on his right, he occupied Mont Potriaux and its outlets with the remainder of his brigade, excepting the 1st and 2nd battalions of the 8th regiment, which he held in reserve.

The 5th and 13th French dragoons finding themselves likely to be thus seriously impeded both in front and on their left, and finally expe-

riencing on their right a cannonade from the two batteries attached to Colonel von Kämpfen's brigade, which had moved forward from the height above Tongrines to the rise of ground south of Tongrenelle, retired from this part of the field. 16th of June.

It will be recollected that Colonel von Stülpnagel's brigade, on relieving that of Colonel von Langen in front of Sombref, had extended a chain of skirmishers along the stream as far as Ligny: these were now reinforced by both the 3rd battalions of the 31st regiment and the 6th Kurmark landwehr, with the 3rd battalion of the 5th Kurmark landwehr in reserve. The 1st and 2nd battalions of the 6th Kurmark landwehr were posted on the height between Sombref and the Bois-du-loup, having on their right, and somewhat in advance, two squadrons from each of the 5th and 6th regiments of Kurmark landwehr-cavalry, together with two guns from the foot-battery No. 12. The remaining four battalions of the brigade were in reserve immediately in front of the inclosures of Sombref.

It was nearly eight o'clock, when General von Krafft despatched an aide-de-camp to the rear with a message stating, that it was only by dint of extraordinary efforts that the troops in Ligny could hold out against the enemy, who was continually advancing with fresh reinforcements. General Count Gneisenau, in the absence of the Prince,

16th of June. sent word that the village must be maintained, at whatever sacrifice, half an hour longer.

About the same time, General von Pirch II. sent word to Blücher that his brigade, in defending St. Amand-la-haye, had expended the whole of its ammunition, and that even the pouches of the killed had been completely emptied. To this the Prince replied, that the 2nd brigade must, nevertheless, not only maintain its post, but also attack the enemy with the bayonet.

In fact, the exhaustion of the Prussian troops was becoming more manifest every moment. Several officers and men, overcome by long-continued exertion, were seen to fall solely from excessive fatigue. No kind of warfare can be conceived more harassing to the combatants than was the protracted contest in the villages which skirted the front of the Prussian position. It partook also of a savage and relentless character. The animosity and exasperation of both parties were uncontrollable. Innumerable individual combats took place. Every house, every court, every wall, was the scene of a desperate conflict. Streets were alternately won and lost. An ungovernable fury seized upon the combatants on both sides, as they rushed wildly forward to relieve their comrades exhausted by their exertions in the deadly strife —a strife in which every individual appeared eager to seek out an opponent, from whose death

he might derive some alleviation to the thirst of hatred and revenge by which he was so powerfully excited. Hence no quarter was asked or granted by either party. 16th of June.

When it is considered that a very great portion of the Prussian army consisted of young soldiers, who were under fire for the first time, their bravery and exertions in maintaining so lengthened a contest of this nature, with the veteran warriors of the French army, cannot fail to be regarded with the highest admiration.

Such were the distribution and the state of the Prussian troops throughout their line, when Napoleon arrived near the lower extremity of Ligny, with a formidable reserve. This consisted of eight battalions of the guard, of Milhaud's corps of heavy cavalry, comprising 8 regiments of cuirassiers, and of the grenadiers à cheval of the guard. It was not, however, his sole reserve, for most opportunely Lobau's corps had just arrived and taken post on the right of Fleurus. The troops which the French Emperor held thus in hand ready to launch as a thunderbolt against the weakened centre of the Prussian line of battle, were perfectly fresh, not having hitherto taken any part whatever in the contest, and they might justly be styled the flower of his army. It was this consciousness of the vantage ground he then possessed which, upon his perceiving the comparatively unoccupied space in rear of Ligny, called forth from

16th of June. him the remark to Count Gérard, "They are lost: they have no reserve remaining!" He saw that not another moment was to be delayed in securing the victory which was now within his grasp, and gave his last orders for the attack at the very time when Blücher, whose right had just been strengthened by the arrival of the remaining three battalions of Colonel von Langen's (the 8th) infantry brigade, was making his dispositions for vigorously assailing the French army in its left flank.

The projected movement that was to decide the battle was preceded, at about half-past eight o'clock, by the rapid advance of several batteries of the guard, which opened a most destructive fire upon the Prussians posted within, and formed in the immediate rear of, Ligny. Under cover of this cannonade, Gérard, with Pecheux's infantry-division, reinforced the troops that still maintained that half of the village which lay on the right bank of the rivulet, and pushed forward with a determination to dislodge the enemy from the remaining portion on the left bank. While the Prussian infantry in rear of Ligny were in movement for the purpose of relieving their comrades who were already giving way before this renewed attack, they suddenly perceived, on the French right of the village, a column issuing from under the heavy smoke that rolled away from the well-served batteries which had so unexpectedly opened upon them, and which continued so fearfully to thin

their ranks; and, as the mass rapidly advanced down the slope with the evident design of forcing a passage across the valley, they could not fail to distinguish both by its well-sustained order and compactness, and by its dark waving surface of bearskins, that they had now to contend against the redoubted imperial guard. Ligny being thus turned, the Prussian infantry, instead of continuing its advance into the village, was necessitated, by its inferiority of numbers, to confine its operations to the securing, as far as possible, an orderly retreat for the defenders of the place. 16th of June.

Notwithstanding their dreadfully exhausted and enfeebled state, and their knowledge that a body of fresh troops was advancing against them, a body, too, which they knew was almost invariably employed whenever some great and decisive blow was to be struck, they evinced not the slightest symptom of irresolution, but, on the contrary, were animated by the most inflexible courage. The sun had gone down, shrouded in heavy clouds, and rain having set in, the battle-field would speedily be enveloped in darkness: hence the Prussians felt that it required but a little more perseverance in their exertions to enable them to counterbalance their deficiency of numbers upon any point of their line by a stern and resolute resistance, sufficient to secure for the entire of their army the means of effecting a retreat, unattended by those disastrous consequences which a signal

16th of June. defeat in the light of day might have entailed upon them.

The 21st regiment of infantry boldly advanced against the French column, with a determination to check its further progress, but soon found itself charged in flank by cavalry that had darted forward from the head of a column which, by the glimmering of its armour, even amidst the twilight, proclaimed itself a formidable body of cuirassiers. It was, in fact, Milhaud's whole corps of that description of force, which had effected its passage on the other side of the village. The 9th regiment of infantry fought its way through a mass of cavalry, whilst Major von Wulffen, with two weak squadrons of the 1st Westphalian landwehr-cavalry, made a gallant charge against the French infantry, which received it with a volley at a distance of twenty paces. The Prussian infantry, compelled to evacuate Ligny, effected its retreat in squares, in perfect order, though surrounded by the enemy, bravely repelling all further attacks, made in the repeated but vain attempts to scatter it in confusion.

Blücher, who had arrived upon the spot from his right, having, in consequence of this sudden turn of affairs, been under the necessity of relinquishing his meditated attack upon the French left, now made a last effort to stem the further advance of the enemy, and, if possible, to force him back upon Ligny. The rain having ceased,

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it became lighter, and the enemy's columns being more clearly discernible, the Prince immediately ordered the advance of three regiments of the cavalry attached to the 1st corps d'armée, namely, the 6th uhlans, the 1st West Prussian dragoons, and the 2nd Kurmark landwehr-cavalry. These regiments, which constituted the only cavalry force immediately at hand, had for some time been posted in reserve, and had suffered severely from their exposure to the fire from the French artillery. Lieut. General von Röder directed the 6th uhlans to make the first charge. The regiment was led on by Lieut. Colonel von Lützow, to whose brigade it belonged. In the charge, which was directed upon the enemy's infantry, von Lützow and several of his officers fell under a volley of musketry. The regiment, which was about 400 strong, lost on this occasion 13 officers and 70 men. A second attack, made by the 1st West Prussian dragoons, and supported by the 2nd Kurmark landwehr-cavalry, seemed to offer a fair prospect of penetrating the French infantry, when the former regiment was unexpectedly charged in flank by the enemy's cuirassiers, and completely dispersed. The Westphalian, and 1st Kurmark, landwehr-cavalry, with several other squadrons of the landwehr, were collected together, and formed a mass of twenty-four squadrons, with which a further attack was made upon the enemy, but without success.

16th of June. The cause of this failure is to be attributed not to the want of sufficient cavalry, for indeed there was an ample number for the purpose, but to the confusion and disorder consequent upon the surprise which the enemy's attack had occasioned, and which was augmented by the darkness that had set in upon the field.

Nor was the failure caused by the absence of that most essential requisite in a charge of cavalry, good example on the part of the officers who lead the well-set squadrons into the midst of an enemy's ranks. Blücher himself, seeing that the fate of the day depended solely on the chance of the cavalry at hand succeeding, while there was yet light, in hurling back the French columns into the valley which they had so suddenly and so resolutely crossed, rallied his routed horsemen, and placing himself at their head, charged, in his old hussar style, with the full determination of restoring, if possible, that equal footing with the enemy which had hitherto been so gallantly maintained. The French firmly stood their ground, and the charge proved ineffectual. As Blücher and his followers retired to rally, they were rapidly pursued by the French cuirassiers. At this moment, the Prince's fine grey charger—a present from the Prince Regent of England—was mortally wounded by a shot, in its left side, near the saddle-girth. On experiencing a check to his speed, Blücher spurred, when the animal, still obe-

dient to the impulse of its gallant master, made a few convulsive plunges forward; but on feeling that his steed was rapidly losing strength, and perceiving at the same time the near approach of the cuirassiers, he cried out to his aide-de-camp:—"Nostitz, now I am lost!" At that moment, the horse fell from exhaustion, rolling upon its right side, and half-burying its rider under its weight. Count Nostitz immediately sprang from his saddle, and holding his bridle with his left hand, for his horse had not been dangerously wounded, he drew his sword, firmly resolved to shed, if necessary, the last drop of his blood, in defending the precious life of his revered general. Scarcely had he done so, when he saw the cuirassiers rushing forward at the charge. To attract as little as possible their attention, he remained motionless. Most fortunately, the rapidity with which the cuirassiers advanced amidst the twilight, already sensibly obscured by the falling rain, precluded them from recognising, or even particularly remarking, the group, although they swept so closely by that one of them rather roughly brushed against the aide-de-camp's horse. Shortly afterwards, the Prussian cavalry having rallied and re-formed, in their turn began to drive back the French. Again the thunder of their hoofs approached, and again the flying host whirled past the Marshal and his anxious friend; whereupon the latter, eagerly watching his opportunity as the pursuers came on, darted

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16th of June. forward, and seizing the bridle of a non-commissioned officer of the 6th uhlans, named Schneider, ordered him and some files immediately following, to dismount and assist in saving the Prince. Five or six powerful men now raised the heavy dead charger, while others extricated the fallen hero, senseless and almost immoveable. In this state they placed him on the non-commissioned officer's horse. Just as they moved off, the enemy was again pressing forward with renewed speed, and Nostitz had barely time to lead the Marshal, whose senses were gradually returning, to the nearest infantry, which gladly received the party, and, retiring in perfect order, bade defiance to the attacks of its pursuers.

The horse-battery No. 2, which had supported these cavalry attacks by directing its fire against the left flank of the enemy, became, all at once, surrounded by French dragoons. These vainly endeavoured to cut the traces, and the Prussian artillerymen defended themselves so well that they succeeded in effecting the escape of the battery through an opening in the inclosures of Bry. The foot-battery No. 3, however, was overtaken in its retreat by the enemy's cavalry, between the windmill and Bry, and lost one of its guns.

During these cavalry attacks, the Prussian infantry, already exhausted, and broken up into separate divisions by the desperate contest in the valley, had collected together at the outlets of the

villages. Some of the regiments presented a remarkable degree of steadiness and good order. At length the cavalry brigade of General von Treskow, then comprising the Queen's and the Brandenburg dragoons, and the Brandenburg uhlans, were brought forward, and made several attacks upon the French infantry and cuirassiers. Colonel von Langen advanced, at the same time, from near the windmill, with the only battalion of his brigade remaining at his disposal, the 2nd of the 23rd regiment, under the guidance of General von Pirch I., and covered by the cavalry of General von Treskow; but all his efforts proved unavailing. He himself was wounded, and then driven over by a gun. The battalion, however, by continuing in admirable order, enabled General von Pirch I., on whom, at this time, the defence of Ligny had devolved, to effect the retreat of the troops from the village. General von Jagow retired, with a part of his brigade, to Bry, and immediately occupied this point. Some battalions of General von Krafft's brigade (the 6th) fell back from Ligny, towards the high road, leaving Bry on their left; others still more to the left towards Bry. 16th of June.

General von Pirch II., whose brigade (the 2nd) had been posted by the Prince in rear of St. Amand-la-haye, preparatory to a renewed attack, was upon the point of proceeding to support the 7th and 8th brigades, then seriously engaged, when he observed the retreat towards Bry. He imme-

16th of June. diately withdrew his brigade to this point, where he supported and facilitated the retreat of the troops from the village, with the assistance of the 12-pounder battery No. 6, and the foot-battery No. 34, as also of the Westphalian landwehr-cavalry, under Major von Wulffen, to which latter corps several dragoons that had become separated from their own regiments, attached themselves.

General von Grolman, the Quarter Master General of the Prussian army, foreseeing the consequences of the line having been thus broken by the enemy, hastened to Bry, and desired General von Pirch II. to cover the retreat by means of the troops here collected together. He then proceeded in the direction of Sombref, and finding near this place two battalions of the 9th regiment (6th brigade) he posted them in rear of a hollow-road leading from Bry towards Sombref. These battalions had, in their retreat from Ligny, defeated several attempts on the part of the enemy's cavalry to break them. Von Grolman, on perceiving a 12-pounder had stuck fast in this hollow-road, ordered the battalions to advance again in front of the latter, to assist in extricating the battery, and to protect its retreat, which was immediately accomplished within view of the French cavalry.

It was at this critical period of the battle, that the 2nd battalion of the 1st Westphalian landwehr, which still continued in reserve, in rear of Bry,

under the command of Captain von Gillnhaussen, appeared upon the height in front, where it particularly distinguished itself. In the first place it succeeded in effectually checking, by its vigorous fire, the French cuirassiers, who were in pursuit of Prussian infantry. Then it drove back French cavalry which was on the point of making a fresh attack upon the Prussian dragoons. Afterwards it successfully withstood three charges by the French cavalry of the guard. General von Grolman now ordered this battalion to join the 9th regiment near Sombref, and, with the latter, to take up a position at the junction of the cross-road from Ligny with that from Bry to Sombref. This position, which was in rear of the before-mentioned hollow-road, was maintained until past midnight. 16th of June.

Such were the circumstances resulting from the French having forced the Prussian line at Ligny, and pursued in the direction of Bry: it is now necessary to explain what occurred, at that time, at, and in the vicinity of, Sombref.

The 1st brigade, which had been placed in reserve, was ordered to take post, in squares, upon the high road to Sombref, to check the pressure of the enemy's cavalry. Subsequently, when the direction of the retreat was decided upon, it fell back upon Tilly. The 4th brigade, with the exception of one or two battalions, advanced again through Sombref towards Ligny, just as the

16th of June. French cavalry pushed towards the high road. The battalions of the brigade formed squares, and fell back upon the high road, whence they continued their further retreat.

At the time the French troops were debouching from Ligny, Colonel von Stülpnagel's (the 12th) brigade was posted in front of Sombref; and Colonel von Rohr had just pushed forward towards Ligny with the 2nd battalion of the 6th Kurmark landwehr, when he perceived three French cavalry regiments advancing against the right wing of the brigade; whereupon he gradually retired, and the whole brigade withdrew itself into Sombref, just as the French cavalry made an attack at the entrance of the village, and captured the two guns of the battery No. 12, which had been posted there. Major von Dorville faced about the rear division of the 6th Kurmark landwehr-cavalry, and gallantly attacked the French cavalry, in the hope of checking their progress, but the lances of his brave followers were shivered against the cuirasses of their opponents, and for a moment the former could only defend themselves with their broken poles. The Prussian infantry, however, hastened forward in support; the French were driven out of the village; and one of the lost guns was retaken.

Every exertion was now made to secure the possession of Sombref. General von Borcke (9th brigade) sent thither two battalions of the 1st

Kurmark landwehr, which, during this movement, fired upon the flank of the enemy's cavalry as the latter fell back. The defence of the entrance into the village from the side of Ligny was confided to the 2nd battalion of the 6th Kurmark landwehr, under Colonel von Rohr. 16th of June.

About this time, General von Jürgass received orders to cover with his cavalry (of the 2nd corps) the retreat of the Prussian infantry from St. Amand-la-haye and Wagnelé. General von Brause, perceiving that the enemy had attacked Colonel von Marwitz's cavalry-brigade, on his right, and endangered his communication with the rear, hastened with the fusilier-battalion of the 22nd regiment (which had continued in reserve in rear of St. Amand-la-haye) towards the high road, upon which the greater part of the 7th brigade had by this time been collected. The Prussians, on retiring from St. Amand-la-haye, were closely followed by the French. The 1st battalion of the 14th regiment was still in the hamlet of St. Amand when it received the order to retire. During its retreat it was attacked whilst in a hollow-way. It immediately showed a front on each flank, and succeeded in driving back the enemy. General von Jürgass now sent forward the 4th squadron of the Brandenburg hussars to attack the enemy's tirailleurs, who were beginning to advance from out of St. Amand-la-haye. The latter were immediately forced back upon the village.

16th of June.

Somewhat later, however, the French tirailleurs poured forth in greater numbers from out of Wagnelé, and threw themselves upon the right flank of the retreating troops. A mêlée ensued, in which General von Jürgass was shot in the shoulder.

The occupation of Bry by General von Pirch II. offered a safe point of retreat to the disordered Prussian battalions; and now that it had become quite dark, von Pirch led all the troops from this post towards Marbais, where they re-formed, and whence, soon afterwards, under the command of Lieut. General von Röder, they continued the retreat upon Tilly. Von Marwitz's cavalry-brigade, which was not pursued with much vigour by the enemy, fell back to the rear of the battalions formed up to cover its movement, and now joined the rest of the cavalry of the right wing, in the general retreat.

The 5th infantry-brigade was in full retreat upon Marbais when the 1st and 2nd battalions of the 22nd regiment still continued posted on the high road, not far from the Trois Burettes. The good order and perfect steadiness of these battalions, which were commanded by Major von Sack, completely checked the further advance of the French cavalry, and greatly facilitated the retreat of the Prussian troops.

After General von Jürgass was wounded, the command of the rear-guard devolved upon Lieut. Colonel von Sohr, of whose brigade (the Bran-

denburg and Pomeranian hussars) it consisted. He executed this duty with great success, falling gradually back upon the cavalry posted in advance of Tilly by Lieut. General von Zieten, who then took command of the whole of the cavalry employed in protecting the retreat. 16th of June.

During the retreat of the centre of the Prussian army, which had been effectually broken, and of its right from St. Amand and Wagnelé, which, in consequence of Blücher's previous dispositions for his contemplated attack upon the French left, was better prepared to sustain a reverse of this kind, the left wing, under Thielemann, maintained its position, and contributed not a little, by its firm countenance, in infusing a considerable degree of caution into the French movements in advance. This was strikingly exemplified by the conduct of the 1st and 2nd battalions of the 30th Prussian regiment. They were posted at Mont Potriaux, and although their knowledge of what was passing on other points of the line was very imperfect, still it sufficed to prompt their commander to cross the rivulet, and undertake, if not a vigorous attack, at least a demonstration, which, now that darkness had almost covered the field, would tend to impede, perhaps to paralyze, the French movements against the Prussian centre. Having effected their passage, they met at first but a feeble opposition from a line of skirmishers: a French regiment of dragoons then advanced very close upon the 2nd

16th of June. battalion, but was driven off; whereupon both these battalions pushed forward, and gained a height which was occupied in force by the enemy. Here they sustained two more cavalry attacks, which proved equally unsuccessful. A mass of infantry belonging to Lobau's corps, having its flanks covered by parties of cavalry, now advanced against the 1st battalion, but having, in the dark, exposed a flank to the battalion, it was also repulsed. Major von Dittfurth, however, finding himself in too isolated a position, did not deem it prudent to advance further upon ground which he knew to be in full possession of the enemy, and therefore retraced his steps.

A renewed attempt was made, at the same time, by the French light cavalry-brigade under General Vallin, to push forward along the high road towards Sombref, and gain possession of the barrier; but the attack was as abortive as had been the former one upon this point.

With the darkness of night, now rapidly deepening, the din of battle, which had been terrific and incessant until the last faint glimmering of twilight, became gradually hushed: its expiring sounds still issuing from the heights in front of Bry, whence the flashes from the fire of artillery, and from that of skirmishers along the outskirts of this village, (held by General von Jagow with the 1st and 2nd battalions of the 9th regiment, and the 2nd battalion of the 1st Westphalian land-

wehr,) indicated to the French army the extreme verge of its advance; while the still more vivid flashes emitted from the rattling musketry fire of the two battalions of the 30th regiment, which had so gallantly sallied forth out of Mont Potriaux, under Major von Dittfurth, as previously described, as also from the Prussian guns which defended the approach to Sombref, and frustrated the renewed attack along the high road towards that point, plainly intimated that the Prussian left wing (Thielemann's corps) still firmly maintained itself in a position whence it might seriously endanger the flank of any further movement in advance against the centre. 16th of June.

Vandamme's corps (the 3rd) bivouacked in advance of St. Amand, Gérard's corps (the 4th) in front of Ligny, the imperial guard upon the heights of Bry, Grouchy's cavalry in rear of Sombref, and Lobau's corps (the 6th) in rear of Ligny. This possession of the field of battle, and the capture of 21 pieces of cannon, were the only advantages of which the French could boast as the immediate result of so severe a struggle. With these, however, it would seem that their Emperor was fully satisfied: if he had entertained any idea of pursuit, it was now abandoned; he took no measures for watching the movements and prying into the designs of his adversary; but left his troops resting in their bivouacs, offering no molestation whatever to the Prussians, whilst he in per-

16th of June. son returned to Fleurus, where he passed the night.

The contrast between the circumstances of the two armies during the night was very striking; for whilst the victors were indulging in perfect repose, the vanquished were completely on the alert, seizing every possible advantage which the extraordinary quietude of their enemies afforded during the precious hours of darkness; and never, perhaps, did a defeated army extricate itself from its difficulties with so much adroitness and order, or retire from a hard-fought field with so little diminution of its moral force. The Prussian commander, completely *hors de combat*, was carried to Gentinnes, about six miles in rear of Ligny, but from the moment his fall became known, his chief of the staff, von Gneisenau, undertook the direction of affairs, and immediately issued his orders for the retreat upon Wavre, by Tilly; the movement to be covered by the troops in position in the immediate vicinity of the enemy. These comprised Thielemann's corps, still in possession of its original position in the line of battle; three battalions (the 1st and 2nd of the 9th regiment, and the 2nd battalion of the 1st Westphalian landwehr,) occupying Bry, and which, together with the 3rd brigade, posted on the left of this village, were commanded by General von Jagow. From this position the latter General quietly effected his retreat about an hour after midnight, taking the

direction of Tilly, by Marbais, where General von Pirch's (the 2nd) brigade, with some other troops had been drawn up in support of the rear-guard. It was not until three o'clock in the morning, when the field of battle had been completely evacuated by the remainder of the Prussian army, that Thielemann commenced his retreat, which he conducted slowly, and in perfect order, to Gembloux, where Bülow's corps d'armée (the 4th) had arrived during the night. 16th of June.

The loss of the Prussian army on the 15th and 16th of June, amounted in killed and wounded* to about 12,000 men: that of the French to between 7 and 8,000. But few prisoners were taken on either side.

In consequence of this defeat, Blücher was compelled, in order to maintain and secure his close communication with Wellington, to abandon the line of the Meuse between Namur and Liege; but his orderly and unmolested retreat afforded him sufficient time to remove all his stores and material from these points to Maestricht and Louvain, which now constituted his new base of operations.

It was not, however, a defeat which involved the loss of every advantage previously gained. Blücher was not *driven* from the field, but, on the

* In this battle, Brigadier General Hardinge, of the British army, (now Lieut. General the Right Hon. Sir Henry Hardinge, K.C.B.,) who had been attached to the Prussian head-quarters by the Duke of Wellington, received a severe wound, by which he lost his left hand.

16th of June. contrary, he maintained it during the night, with the exception of the villages of Ligny and St. Amand in his front; thus facilitating the orderly retreat of his own army, and, at the same time, affording a considerable degree of security to the direct line of retreat of the Duke of Wellington. The defeat certainly compelled the latter to retire on the following morning; but so long as Blücher had it in his power to fall back in such a manner as to effect his junction the next day with Wellington, who would necessarily be obliged also to retire on his part, whatever might have been his success at Quatre-Bras, the advantage which accrued to the common object of the two commanders was of the highest importance. They would then unite after the concentration of each army had been accomplished: hitherto, they had been compelled to meet their opponents before they had succeeded in collecting their respective forces. If, however, Wellington had been unable to maintain his ground against Ney, and Napoleon had in this manner succeeded in beating both armies in detail, or, if the Prussian defeat had been followed up by a vigorous pursuit, the loss of the battle of Ligny might have placed both armies in a critical position.

The struggle at Ligny was undoubtedly of a most desperate and sanguinary character. It was, almost throughout, one continued village-fight; a species of contest which, though extremely ha-

rassing and destructive to both parties engaged, was that most likely to prove of long duration, and consequently to afford a better prospect of relief by the promised support from Wellington, or by the hoped-for junction of Bülow. It remains a question whether Blücher, had he confined himself during the latter part of the action to the same defensive system he had so successfully carried on up to that time, instead of detaching his reserves to the right, and preparing for an attack upon the enemy's left, might not have fully maintained his original position until dark, and thus have saved his army from defeat. By the arrival of Bülow's corps during the night, he would then have been prepared to meet his opponent on the following morning with a greatly preponderating force, whilst, on the other hand, Wellington, having concentrated a considerable portion of his army, would have been placed in an equally advantageous position as regards the already vanquished enemy in his own front. When it is considered that along the whole extent of Blücher's line, the French had not gained any material advantage upon one single point, and that the Prussians continued to hold their ground with most exemplary firmness, the circumstance of his not having delayed the collecting of his reserves, for a grand attack upon the enemy's left, until actually joined by either the British or Bülow's troops, can scarcely be explained except by a reference to the

16th of June.

16th of June. peculiar character of the Prussian chief, whose natural fiery temperament led him, in all probability, to seize with avidity the first prospect which opened itself of a favourable opportunity of aiming a deadly thrust at his hated foe, rather than to adhere to that comparatively passive kind of warfare which so ill suited his own individual inclination and disposition.

Napoleon had undoubtedly gained the victory from the moment he succeeded in penetrating the Prussian centre, but it was not distinguished by that brilliant success, or by those immediate and decisive advantages, which might have been anticipated from the admirable manner in which the attack had been gradually prepared, and the care with which it was concealed from the Prussians, at a moment when they had no reserve remaining, and when the co-operation of the British on their right, or the arrival of Bülow's corps from Hannut, had become quite impracticable. This appears the more surprising when we reflect that he had the whole of Lobau's corps, with which he supported this attack, at hand, as also a considerable corps of cavalry under Grouchy.

The consequences resulting from the absence of energetic measures on the part of the French Emperor, in following up the defeat of the Prussians, on the evening of the 16th and morning of the 17th, will be fully developed in subsequent chapters.

CHAPTER VII.

An engagement of short duration, and originating accidentally, takes place between the French and Anglo-allied picquets, on the field of Quatre-Bras, about an hour before daylight of the 17th of June—Wellington detaches a patrole to his left for the purpose of gaining intelligence concerning Blücher's movements—Upon its return he decides on retrograding his forces to the position in front of Waterloo—Order of movement—Retreat of the Anglo-allied infantry; masked from the enemy—Ney's views and dispositions—Napoleon communicates to Ney the result of the battle of Ligny, and proposes, should the enemy's force at Quatre-Bras advance against him, to co-operate with the Marshal in a combined attack upon the Anglo-allied army—Tardiness of Napoleon's movements—Simultaneous advance of Napoleon and Ney against Wellington—Uxbridge's dispositions for the retreat of the British cavalry—Brilliant cavalry-affair at Genappe—Retreat continued to the Waterloo position—Napoleon's advance checked on his reaching La Belle Alliance—Remarks on the retreat—Blücher's promised support—Wellington's disposition of his detached troops under Sir Charles Colville and Prince Frederick of Orange—The French and Anglo-allied armies establish their respective bivouacs for the night.

17th of June.

THE bivouac on the field of Quatre-Bras, during the night of the 16th, continued undisturbed until about an hour before daylight, when a cavalry-patrole having accidentally got between the adverse picquets near Piermont, caused an alarm in that quarter that was quickly communicated to both armies by a rattling fire of musketry, which, rapidly augmenting, extended itself along the line of the advanced posts. Among the first who hastened to ascertain the origin and nature of the

17th of June. engagement was Picton, who, together with other staff-officers, as they arrived in succession, on discovering that no advance had been attempted or intended on either side, soon succeeded in restoring confidence. Similar exertions were successfully made on the part of the French officers, and as day began to break upon the scene, both parties resumed their previous tranquillity. In this untoward affair, the picquets furnished by Kielmansegge's Hanoverian brigade, and by the 3rd Brunswick light battalion were sharply engaged, and a picquet of the field-battalion Bremen suffered considerably.

It was not long before Wellington, who had slept at Genappe, arrived at Quatre-Bras, where he found Major General Sir Hussey Vivian, whose brigade of light cavalry, consisting of the 10th British hussars, (under Colonel Quentin,*) of the 18th British hussars, (under Lieut. Colonel the Hon. Henry Murray,†) and of the 1st hussars of the King's German legion, (under Lieut. Colonel von Wissell,‡) was posted on the left of that point with two strong picquets thrown out; one, of the 18th hussars, under Captain Croker,§ on the Namur road, and the other, of the 10th hussars,

* Now Lieut. General Sir George Quentin, C.B., K.C.H.

† Now Major General the Hon. Henry Murray, C.B.

‡ Lieut. Colonel von Wissell, K.C.H., Major General in the Hanoverian service, died on the 30th of May, 1842.

§ Now Lieut. Colonel Richard Croker, h.p.

under Major the Hon. Frederick Howard,* in front. Vivian, on being asked what account he could give of the enemy, communicated to the Duke the result of his observations, which were necessarily very limited, as, with the exception of the firing that had taken place, as before mentioned, along the line of picquets, the French had continued perfectly quiet, and had as yet given no indication of any offensive movement. The Duke then took a general survey of the field, and while sweeping the horizon with his telescope, he discovered a French vedette on some rising ground, in the direction of Fleurus, and a little to the right of the high road leading to Namur, apparently belonging to some picquet thrown out from Ney's extreme right on the previous night, after the battle had ceased; or to some detached corps placed in that quarter for the purpose of observation, and for the maintenance of the communication between Napoleon and Ney. The Duke had received no intelligence of Blücher; and, probably judging from the advanced position of the vedette in question that whatever might have been the result of the battle of Ligny, the Prussians could not have made any forward movement likely to endanger Ney's right, he came to the conclusion that it was quite possible that, on the other hand, Napoleon might have crossed the

17th of June.

* Major the Hon. Frederick Howard was killed at the battle of Waterloo.

17th of June. Namur road, and cut off his communication with Blücher, with the design of manœuvring upon his left and rear, and causing him to be simultaneously attacked by Ney. His Grace therefore desired Vivian to send a strong patrole along the Namur road to gain intelligence respecting the Prussian army. A troop of the 10th hussars, under Captain Grey,* was accordingly despatched on this duty, accompanied by Lieut. Colonel Sir Alexander Gordon,† one of the Duke's aides-de-camp. As the patrole advanced along the road, the vedette before mentioned began to circle, evidently to give notice of the approach of an enemy. This induced the patrole to move forward with great caution, so as to guard against the possibility of being cut off. Nevertheless it advanced about four or five miles along the road, and Sir Alexander Gordon brought back word that the Prussians had retreated towards Wavre, that the French occupied the ground on which the battle had been fought, but that they had neither crossed, nor even possessed themselves of, the high road along which the patrole had proceeded almost into the immediate vicinity of their advanced posts. This latter circumstance was very remarkable, and served to satisfy Wellington that, either Napoleon's victory had not been followed up with a

* Now Colonel John Grey, *ret.*

† Lieut. Colonel the Hon. Sir Alexander Gordon was killed at the battle of Waterloo.

vigour and an effect, by which the safety of his own army would have been perilled, or, that it had not been of a character sufficiently decisive to have enabled the French Emperor to avail himself of such a vantage-ground. Having ascertained that the contingency for which, as has already been explained, he was fully prepared, had actually taken place, he instantly decided upon retrograding his troops to a position in front of the point of junction of the roads leading from Charleroi and Nivelles upon Brussels, in which he might rely upon the co-operation of a sufficient portion of Blücher's forces from Wavre with his own, by which he would be enabled to confront Napoleon and his main army with ample means, and thus attain that great aim and end of all strategy, of "operating with the greatest mass in a combined effort upon a decisive point."* 17th of June.

Hence, a change in the direction of the previously ordered movements became necessary, and the following instructions were issued:—

'To General Lord Hill.

'17th June, 1815.

'The 2nd division of British infantry to march from Nivelles on Waterloo, at 10 o'clock.

'The brigades of the 4th division, now at Nivelles, to march from that place on Waterloo, at

* Jomini.

17th of June. 10 o'clock. Those brigades of the 4th division at Braine-le-Comte, and on the road from Braine-le-Comte to Nivelles, to collect and halt at Braine-le-Comte this day.

'All the baggage on the road from Braine-le-Comte to Nivelles to return immediately to Braine-le-Comte, and to proceed immediately from thence to Hal and Bruxelles.

'The spare musket ammunition to be immediately parked behind Genappe.

'The corps under the command of Prince Frederick of Orange will move from Enghien this evening, and take up a position in front of Hal, occupying Braine-le-Château with two battalions.

'Colonel Estorff will fall back with his brigade on Hal, and place himself under the orders of Prince Frederick.'*

Shortly after the departure of the before-mentioned patrole of the 10th hussars, along the Namur road, the Duke received some despatches from England, to which he gave his attention; and now that he had satisfied himself as to the real state of things, and issued his orders for the movements of his distant troops, as also for the retreat of those present in the field, he laid himself down on the ground near Quatre-Bras, covered his head with

* Despatches of Field Marshal the Duke of Wellington, compiled by Colonel Gurwood. Vol. XII., page 475.

one of the newspapers he had been reading, which had accompanied those despatches, and appeared to fall asleep. After remaining some time in this state, he again rose, mounted his horse, and rode a little distance down the field in front of Quatre-Bras. He then looked about through his telescope, and expressed to those about him his astonishment at the perfect stillness of the enemy, remarking at the same time, "What if they should be also retiring? It is not at all impossible." 17th of June.

A second officer had been despatched from the Prussian to the Anglo-allied head-quarters, and it was about this time that he reached the Duke, with the intelligence that the army was in retreat upon Wavre. Wellington immediately wrote a letter to Blücher, acquainting him with his intended retrograde movements, and proposing to accept a battle, on the following day, in the position in front of Waterloo, provided the Prince would detach two corps to his assistance.

The following is the manner in which the retreat of the Anglo-allied infantry, then in full operation, was executed. It was an important matter to mask the retreat as much as possible, so as to gain time for the free and unimpeded movement of the army along the high road leading to the position in front of Waterloo. For this purpose, the light troops continued to maintain the line of outposts, until their respective supports, which had remained stationary sufficiently long to conceal the retreat of

17th of June. the troops in their rear, began also to retire. The 1st and 5th British divisions, and the 2nd Dutch-Belgian division, as also the Brunswick corps, effected their retreat in excellent order, notwithstanding the delay that was created by the narrowness of the bridge and street of Genappe. Their retreat was covered by Alten's division, to which were added for this purpose, the 1st battalion of the 95th British regiment, (rifles,) the 2nd and 3rd Brunswick light battalions, and the Brunswick advanced-guard-battalion. The main body of this division commenced its retreat about eleven o'clock. Ompteda's brigade of the King's German legion was withdrawn to Sart-à-Mavelines, which it immediately occupied, as also the wood of Les Censes, in its front. Halkett's British brigade then retired secretly until it reached some favourable ground, a little distance in rear of Ompteda's brigade, upon which it was immediately drawn up. Kielmansegge's Hanoverian brigade was withdrawn still further to the rear, and occupied a third position. Thus posted, the division was ordered, in the event of being attacked, to retire by brigades alternately.

It was a little before mid-day when the light troops of Alten's division began to retire. They occupied the advanced line, commencing from the southern extremity of the wood of Bossu on the right, extending along Gemioncourt and the inclosures of Piermont, and crossing the Namur

road on the left; from which line they gradually and slowly fell back upon Ompteda's brigade, in a manner evincing admirable skill, steadiness, and regularity. 17th of June.

In order more effectually to mask the movements on the Allied side of the Namur road, the whole of the cavalry was drawn up in two lines immediately contiguous to, and in rear of, that road; the heavy cavalry forming the second line, and picquets being thrown out from the first line, to relieve those of the retiring infantry.

The main body of Alten's division now commenced its further retreat; but not by alternate brigades, this mode having been directed only in the event of an attack: the latter retired successively in the order in which they stood, preserving their relative distances, so that they might commence the alternate system of retreat, if attacked. To facilitate the passage of other portions of the army through the narrow defile of the bridge and town of Genappe, this division retired by Bézy, and crossed the Genappe, lower down the stream, by the bridge of Wais-le-Hutte.

In the early part of the morning, Ney had, like his opponent, been ignorant of the result of the battle of Ligny, but he was aware that the Anglo-allied army had been considerably reinforced during the night, principally by the arrival of its cavalry. The Marshal calculated that if Napo-

17th of June. leon had gained a victory, and crossed the Namur road, the longer Wellington remained in the position of Quatre-Bras, the greater the danger he incurred of having not only his communication with Blücher effectually cut off, but also his main line of retreat upon Brussels intercepted; and that in such a case it was wiser not to advance against the British General, as the latter might then retire, and thus elude the effect of a combined operation between Napoleon's and his own forces. He also judged that if, on the other hand, the French Emperor had been defeated, an attack made on his own part, upon the Anglo-allied army, might subject himself to the risk of having to contend against a combined operation between Wellington and Blücher, and thus expose both his own and Napoleon's forces to the probability of being defeated in detail. In this uncertainty, Ney sent a message by General Count Flahaut, who happened to be still with him, and who was returning to rejoin the Emperor wherever he might be found, expressive of his anxiety to learn the result of the action of the preceding day. In the mean time, he kept his troops in a state of perfect quietude: his main body was posted in reserve on the heights of Frasne, between which and the outposts there were intermediate columns of support; but no movement whatever was attempted.

Ney at length received the information he had

solicited, in a despatch* from Soult, wherein the result of the battle of Ligny was briefly described. It also stated that Napoleon was proceeding, with the principal portion of his forces, to the mill of Bry, close to which the high road leads from Namur to Quatre-Bras, and that therefore it would not be practicable for the Anglo-allied army to act against him (Ney); but that should such a case happen, the Emperor would march directly upon it by that road, while Ney should attack it in front, and in this manner that army would at once be destroyed. The despatch required from Ney a report of the exact position of his forces, and an account of all that was going on in his front. Hence it is evident that Ney's opinion, that a victory at Ligny ought to be followed up by a combined attack upon Wellington, perfectly coincided with Napoleon's views: but while Ney was thus justified in remaining inactive during the early part of the day, the fact of the Emperor's not moving directly upon Genappe with the morning's dawn, and his excessive delay in breaking up his bivouac at Ligny, are inexplicable. A glorious opportunity had presented itself for the attainment of his original design of defeating both armies in detail, but which was completely lost by a most extraordinary and fatal want of energy and

17th of June.

* Appendix XXVII.

17th of June. vigour in seizing upon the advantages which the victory of Ligny had placed within his reach.

Ney, having ascertained that Napoleon's forces were in motion, had commenced the advance of his own troops, when a second despatch reached him, dated, "in front of Ligny, at noon,"* intimating that the Emperor had just posted a corps of infantry and the imperial guard in advance of Marbais, that he wished him to attack the enemy at Quatre-Bras, and force him from his position; and that his operations would be seconded by the corps at Marbais, to which point his Majesty was proceeding in person.

Upon discovering that the Anglo-allied infantry had retired, and that the troops around, and in rear of, Quatre-Bras, consisted of cavalry covering the retreat, Ney brought forward his own cavalry in advance, and appeared to regulate its movements so that its attack might be directed against the front of the British simultaneously with that of the cavalry which he now perceived advancing along the Namur road against its flank.

About this time, the 10th hussars were moved across the Namur road, and down the slope in front, where they were halted, in echellon of squadrons; and while they were thus posted, Wellington and his staff came to the front of the regi-

* Appendix XXVIII.

ment. From this spot the Duke was attentively watching, through his telescope, the dispositions and movements of the French, when all at once, at a distance of about two miles, masses were seen forming on the side of the Namur road, conspicuously glittering in the sun's rays; by which the Duke was at first induced to believe that they were infantry, whose bayonets were so brilliantly reflected; but it was soon discovered that they were cuirassiers. After a short time, these were observed to advance, preceded by lancers,* and it was not long before the picquet of the 18th British hussars, posted on that road, began skirmishing, as did also the picquet of the 10th British hussars, more in the front of the position, and likewise, still further to the right, in front of Quatre-Bras, a picquet consisting of a squadron of the 11th British light dragoons, detached from Major General Vandeleur's† brigade, which comprised the 11th light dragoons, (under Lieut. Colonel Sleigh,)‡ the 12th light dragoons, (under Colonel the Hon. Frederick Ponsonby,§) and the 16th light dragoons, (under Lieut. Colonel Hay.‖) The 10th hussars then fell back again into their proper place

17th of June.

* The cuirassiers were those of Milhaud's corps, and the lancers formed part of Subervie's light cavalry-division. See page 291.

† Now General Sir John Vandeleur, G.C.B.

‡ Now Lieut. General James W. Sleigh, C.B.

§ Major General the Hon. Sir Frederick C. Ponsonby, K.C.B., G.C.M.G., K.C.H., died on the 10th of January, 1837.

‖ Now Major General James Hay, C.B.

17th of June.

in the line. Vivian now took up a new alignment, throwing back his left so as to present a front to the enemy's advance, and to protect the left of the position. Vandeleur's brigade was then in right rear of Vivian's, and close to Quatre-Bras.

The Anglo-allied infantry having, some time previously, entirely crossed the Genappe, with the exception of the 1st battalion 95th British regiment, (rifles,) which had been directed to remain until the last moment, and which was now retiring to Genappe, (where it was subsequently drawn up at the entrance of the town,) and the Duke having satisfied himself that a formidable body of the French cavalry was endeavouring to fall upon him and to molest his retreat, it became a question with his Grace, at the moment, how far it might be advisable to offer any serious resistance to the advance of the enemy; but Lieut. General the Earl of Uxbridge, the commander of the Anglo-allied cavalry, having remarked that, considering the defiles in the rear, and the distance to which the great mass of the infantry had already retired, and from which it could offer no immediate support, he did not think the cavalry was favourably situated for making such an attempt. Wellington assented to the correctness of this view, and requested his Lordship at once to carry into effect the retreat of the cavalry.

Uxbridge immediately made the following dispositions for this purpose. The 1st or household

brigade of heavy cavalry, commanded by Major General Lord Edward Somerset,* and consisting of the 1st life guards, (under Lieut. Colonel Ferrior,†) of the 2nd life guards, (under Lieut. Colonel the Hon. Edward P. Lygon,‡) of the royal horse guards, or blues, (under Lieut. Colonel Sir Robert Chambre Hill,§) and of the 1st (or King's) dragoon guards, (under Colonel Fuller,‖) together with the 2nd brigade of heavy cavalry, commanded by Major General the Hon. Sir William Ponsonby,¶ consisting of the 1st, or Royal dragoons, (under Lieut. Colonel Clifton,**) of the 2nd Royal North British dragoons, or Scots Greys, (under Colonel Hamilton,††) and of the 6th, or Inniskilling dragoons, (under Colonel Muter,‡‡) formed the centre column, which was to retire by the Brussels high road. Vandeleur's and Vivian's brigades constituted the left column, which was to effect its retreat by a bridge over the Genappe at Thuy, still lower down the stream than that by which Alten's infantry-division had crossed. The right

17th of June.

* General Lord Edward Somerset, G.C.B., died on the 1st of September, 1842.

† Lieut. Colonel Samuel Ferrior was killed at the battle of Waterloo.

‡ Now Major General the Hon. Edward Pyndar Lygon, C.B.

§ Now Colonel Sir Robert Chambre Hill, C.B., *ret.*

‖ Colonel William Fuller was killed at the battle of Waterloo.

¶ Major General the Hon. Sir William Ponsonby, K.C.B., was killed at the battle of Waterloo.

** Now Lieut. General Sir Arthur Clifton, K.C.B., K.C.H.

†† Colonel James Inglis Hamilton was killed at the battle of Waterloo.

‡‡ Lieut. General Sir Joseph Straton, (to which this officer's name was subsequently changed,) C.B., K.C.H, died on the 23rd of October, 1840.

17th of June. column was formed of part of the 3rd light cavalry brigade, commanded by Major General Sir William Dörnberg, namely, the 1st and 2nd light dragoons of the King's German legion, (under Lieut. Colonels von Bülow * and de Jonquières,†) while the remaining regiment, which was the 23rd British light dragoons, (under Colonel the Earl of Portarlington,‡) was employed as a portion of the rear-guard of the centre column. The 15th British hussars, (under Lieut. Colonel Dalrymple,§) belonging to the 5th cavalry-brigade, under Major General Sir Colquhoun Grant,‖ was also attached to the right column; while of the two remaining regiments of the brigade, the 2nd hussars of the King's German legion, (under Lieut. Colonel von Linsingen,¶) and the 7th British hussars, (under Colonel Sir Edward Kerrison,**) the former had been left in occupation of a line of posts on the French frontier, extending from Courtrai, through Menin, Ypres, Loo, and Fürnes, to the North Sea, and the latter formed a part of the rear-guard of

* Now Colonel John von Bülow, C.B., K.H.

† Major General Charles Frederick de Jonquières, K.H., of the Hanoverian service, died on the 12th of October, 1831.

‡ Now Colonel the Earl of Portarlington, *ret.*

§ Lieut. Colonel Leighton C. Dalrymple, C.B., died on the 15th of June, 1820.

‖ Lieut. General Sir Colquhoun Grant, K.C.B., G.C.H., died on the 20th of December, 1835.

¶ Colonel Augustus Henry von Linsingen, of the Hanoverian service, died on the 12th of December, 1817.

** Now Lieut. General Sir Edward Kerrison, Bart., K.C.B., G.C.H.

the centre column. This right column was to pass the Genappe by a ford higher up the stream than the town of Genappe. 17th of June.

These skilful dispositions had scarcely been arranged, when the picquet of the 18th hussars, on the left, came in at a good round trot, followed by two or three squadrons of French cavalry, upon which Vivian's battery of horse-artillery opened a fire, whereby their advance was checked. The enemy, however, was observed to be very active in bringing up his artillery, which soon opened upon the hussar-brigade. Vivian, having received the Earl of Uxbridge's instructions to retire, accompanied with an intimation that he would be supported by Vandeleur's brigade, then in his rear, and observing that the French cavalry was pressing forward in great numbers, not only in his front, but also on his flank, he put his brigade about, and retired in line, covered by the skirmishers. The French followed, with loud cries of "*Vive l'Empereur!*" and just as the brigade reached a sort of hollow, their guns again opened, throwing shells, which mostly flew over the heads of the 18th hussars, against which regiment they appeared to be principally directed. In the mean time, Vandeleur's brigade had been drawn up in support, on rather a commanding position, and Vivian approached it in the full expectation that it would open out for the passing through of his own men, and take the rear-guard in its turn; but

17th of June. on the hussars arriving within fifty or sixty yards of the 4th brigade, Vandeleur put it about, and retired. Vivian immediately occupied the ground thus vacated, and, with a view to check the enemy's advance more effectually, ordered the 18th hussars to charge, as soon as the French approached within favourable reach.

The weather, during the morning, had become oppressively hot; it was now a dead calm; not a leaf was stirring; and the atmosphere was close to an intolerable degree; while a dark, heavy, dense cloud impended over the combatants. The 18th hussars were fully prepared, and awaited but the command to charge, when the brigade-guns on the right commenced firing, for the purpose of previously disturbing and breaking the order of the enemy's advance. The concussion seemed instantly to rebound through the still atmosphere, and communicate, as an electric spark, with the heavily charged mass above. A most awfully loud thunder-clap burst forth, immediately succeeded by a rain which has never, probably, been exceeded in violence even within the tropics. In a very few minutes the ground became perfectly saturated; so much so that it was quite impracticable for any rapid movement of the cavalry. The enemy's lancers, opposed to the 6th British brigade, began to relax in their advance, and to limit it to skirmishing; but they seemed more intent upon endeavouring to envelope, and inter-

cept the retreat of, the hussars. Vivian now replaced the 18th hussars by the 1st hussars of the King's German legion, as rear-guard, with orders to cover well the left flank and left front of the brigade. He had already sent off his battery of horse-artillery, to cross the Genappe by the bridge of Thuy, and despatched an aide-de-camp to Vandeleur, to request he would move his brigade as quickly as possible across that bridge, so that he might meet with no interruption in his retreat, in the event of his being hard pressed. 17th of June.

Of the centre column, the heavy brigades of Lord Edward Somerset and Sir William Ponsonby had retired along the Charleroi road, and were taking up a position on some high ground, a little in rear of Genappe, on either side of that road. The detached squadron of the 11th light dragoons, (under Captain Schreiber,*) was withdrawn, and directed to retire through the above town. The 23rd light dragoons were also withdrawn, and posted upon the ascent between Genappe and the position occupied by the two heavy brigades. The 7th hussars continued on the south side of Genappe, as rear-guard.

Neither the centre, nor the right, column experienced any serious molestation in its retreat while on the French side of the Genappe: large bodies of cavalry were seen in motion, but their

* Lieut. Colonel James Alfred Schreiber died on the 5th of June, 1840.

17th of June. advanced guards limited their attacks to skirmishing.

At length the 7th hussars retired through Genappe, after having thrown out their right squadron, commanded by Major Hodge,* as rear-guard, to cover the retreat of the centre column, regulating its proceedings in conformity with such orders as it might receive from Major General Sir William Dörnberg, who had been desired to superintend the movements of the skirmishers. Major Hodge led out the right troop, under Captain Elphinstone,† to skirmish, while Lieutenant Standish O'Grady,‡ who commanded the left troop, held the high road, from which he had occasionally to send assistance to the former, and frequently to advance, to enable the skirmishers to hold their ground, as their movements were difficult, through ploughed fields so soft that the horses always sank up to their knees, and sometimes to their girths. In this manner, every inch of ground was disputed, until within a short distance of Genappe. Here Dörnberg informed Lieutenant O'Grady, that he must leave him; that it was of the utmost importance to face the enemy boldly at this spot, as the bridge in the town of Genappe was so narrow that the squadron would have to pass it in

* Major Edward Hodge was killed at Genappe.

† Lieut. Colonel James D. Elphinstone retired from the service in Sept. 1832.

‡ Now Colonel Lord Viscount Guillamore.

file; that he was to endeavour as much as possible to obtain time for drawing off the skirmishers, but not to compromise his troop too much. Lieutenant O'Grady then called in the skirmishers, and advanced with his own troop boldly up the road at a trot. The cavalry immediately opposed to him, went about, followed by him for some distance; and he thus continued alternately advancing and retiring, until he saw all the right troop safe on the road in his rear. He then began to retire at a walk, occasionally halting and fronting, until he turned the corner of the town of Genappe; when he filed the men from the left, and passed through the place at a gallop.* Upon the arrival of the squadron at the opposite entrance of Genappe, it was posted between the latter and the main body of the 7th hussars, which had been drawn up on the road in a column of divisions, prepared to

17th of June.

* Dörnberg had been some time riding about with Lieutenant O'Grady, and on taking leave of him, on the French side of Genappe, shook his hand, while his manner and his observations sufficiently indicated that he considered the service to be one of forlorn hope, and that he did not expect ever to see his young friend again. When the latter rejoined him on the other side of the town, after having so ably executed the duty allotted to him, and reported that he had not lost a man or a horse, Dörnberg exclaimed, "Then Buonaparte is not with them: if he were, not a man of you could have escaped." I have, perhaps, entered rather too much into detail on this point—at least, I anticipate some such remark on the part of the old campaigners—but I could not withhold from the youthful military aspirant, so instructive an example of the important service which may be rendered, and of the great credit which may be gained, by an officer holding even a subordinate rank, when possessing, in an equal degree, the tact, discretion, and gallantry, which distinguished Lieutenant O'Grady's conducton this occasion.

17th of June. check the advance of the enemy on his debouching from the town.

The British left cavalry column continued its retreat, which was towards the little bridge of Thuy, by deep narrow lanes, converted by the tremendous pour of rain into perfect streams. Vivian withdrew the 10th and 18th hussars from the position he last occupied, but on their approaching the Genappe an interruption occurred in consequence of Vandeleur's brigade not having effected its passage across the bridge; and the delay became so great that he was induced to put about the 18th hussars, with a view to their affording a support to the 1st German hussars, should they require it. In a short time after this, Vandeleur's brigade resumed its progress: the 10th hussars followed; and, as the 1st hussars, with which regiment Vivian himself was at the moment, continued to maintain a vigorous and effective skirmish, he ordered the 18th to resume its retrograde movement; having previously directed that some men of the 10th hussars should be dismounted on reaching the opposite bank of the Genappe, and be prepared with their carbines to defend the passage, should the retreat of the remainder of the brigade be severely pressed. After skirmishing some time, Vivian despatched a squadron of the 1st German hussars to the bridge, and the moment he began to do so, the French cavalry again pushed forward with so much boldness and

rapidity as to interpose between the left squadron and the main body of the regiment, and to compel that squadron to pass the Genappe lower down than the bridge over which the brigade crossed the little stream. Having ascertained that all was ready, Vivian galloped down the road to the bridge with the remainder of the 1st German hussars. The French followed them, loudly cheering, but as soon as the hussars cleared the bridge, and the enemy's dragoons reached it, some of the dismounted men that had been formed along the top of the opposite bank, in rear of a hedge, overlooking the bridge and a hollow-way, through which the road led from it up the ascent, opened a fire upon the foremost of the French lancers that had come up to the other end of the bridge, while the remainder of the 10th, and the whole of the 18th hussars, were drawn up along the rising ground or bank. The good countenance here shown by Vivian's brigade, combined with the soft and miry state of the ground after the thunderstorm had set in, completely checked the pursuit by the enemy's cavalry, which now turned towards the high road. The left cavalry column, after Vivian's brigade had remained in its position for some little time, continued its retreat without further molestation, (the enemy having contented himself with merely detaching a patrole to watch its movements,) along a narrow cross-road, running nearly parallel with the Charleroi high road,

17th of June.

17th of June. and leading through the villages of Glabbaix, Maransart, Aywiers, Frischermont, Smohain, and Verd-cocou. Here Vivian's brigade arrived in the evening, in the vicinity of the Forest of Soignies, and bivouacked; while Vandeleur's brigade passed the night somewhat nearer to the ground which had been selected for the position to be taken up by the Anglo-allied army.

The right cavalry column, consisting only, as previously stated, of the 1st and 2nd light dragoons of the King's German legion, and of the 15th British hussars, effected its retreat in good order, protected by its skirmishers, as far as the ford, which it crossed above Genappe. At this point, the French cavalry suspended its pursuit, and proceeded, in like manner as that on the right had done, to join the main body on the high road; while the British right cavalry column continued its retreat unmolested towards the position of Waterloo, in rear of which it bivouacked.

A large body of French cavalry, consisting of from sixteen to eighteen squadrons, was now entering Genappe by the Charleroi road, followed by the main body of the French army under Napoleon.

The Earl of Uxbridge, who was desirous of checking the enemy's advance, so as to gain sufficient time for the orderly retreat of the Anglo-allied army, and to prevent a compromise of any portion of the rearmost troops, decided upon em-

bracing the advantage which the narrow defile of Genappe seemed to present in aid of his design. The town consists mainly of houses lining the high road, on the Brussels side of the bridge. The road then ascends a ridge, the brow of which is about six or seven hundred yards distant, and here Lord Uxbridge had halted the heavy brigades of Lord Edward Somerset and of Sir William Ponsonby, and posted them so as to cover the retirement of the light cavalry. At first, he formed them in line; Somerset's on the right, and Ponsonby's on the left, of the high road; but observing, by the enemy's formidable advance, that the light cavalry would soon be compelled to fall back, his Lordship drew up Somerset's brigade in a column of half squadrons upon, but close to, the right of the road itself, so as to admit of troops retiring by its left; and formed Ponsonby's brigade into a column of half squadrons upon the left of the high road, and somewhat to the rear. The 7th hussars were formed at some little distance in rear of Genappe, and the 23rd light dragoons were drawn up in support of that regiment, and about midway between it and the heavy cavalry on the height. The squadron of the 7th hussars, under Major Hodge, it will be recollected, was halted between the main body of that regiment and the town of Genappe. 17th of June.

Thus posted, the centre retiring cavalry column remained about twenty minutes, when loud shouts

17th of June. announced that the French had entered the town. Presently a few horsemen appeared galloping out of the street, and dashed at speed into Major Hodge's squadron. They were found, on being taken, to be quite inebriated. In a few moments afterwards, the French column showed its head within the town: the leading troop consisted of lancers, all very young men, mounted on very small horses, and commanded by a fine-looking, and, as it subsequently appeared, a very brave man. The column remained about fifteen minutes within the town, its head halted at the outlet facing the British rear-guard, and its flanks protected by the houses. The street not being straight, and the rear of the column not being aware that the front had halted, continued pressing forward, until the whole mass became so jammed that it was impossible for the foremost ranks to go about, should such a movement become necessary. Their apparent hesitation and indecision induced Lord Uxbridge, who stood upon some elevated ground adjoining the right of the road, to order the 7th hussars to charge. The latter, animated by the presence of the commander of the cavalry, who was also their own colonel, rushed forward with the most determined spirit and intrepidity; while the French, awaiting the onslaught, opposed to them a close, compact, and impenetrable phalanx of lances; which, being securely flanked by the houses, and backed by a solid mass of horsemen,

presented a complete *chevaux de frise*. Hence, it is not surprising that the charge should have made no impression upon the enemy; nevertheless, the contest was maintained for some considerable time; the hussars cutting at their opponents, and the latter parrying and thrusting, neither party giving way a single inch of ground; both the commanding officer of the lancers, and Major Hodge, commanding the leading squadron of the hussars, were killed, gallantly fighting to the last. The French had by this time established a battery of horse artillery on the left of Genappe and upon the opposite bank of the river, from which they opened a brisk fire upon the British cavalry in support, and several shot struck the main body of the 7th hussars, upsetting men and horses, and causing great impediments in their rear. The French lancers now advanced, and drove the 7th hussars upon their reserve; but here the 7th rallied, renewed their attack, and forced back the lancers upon the town. The latter having been reinforced, rallied in their turn, and drove back the hussars. These, however, again rallied, and resolutely faced their opponents, with whom they gallantly continued a fierce encounter for some time longer, when, to terminate a conflict which was most obstinate and sanguinary without being productive of any favourable result, but in which the bravery of the 7th hussars shone most conspicuously, and became the theme of admiration of all who wit- 17th of June.

17th of June.

nessed it, Lord Uxbridge decided upon withdrawing that regiment, and charging with the 1st life guards. As soon as the hussars went about, in pursuance of the orders received, the lancers followed them. In the mêlée which ensued, the French lost quite as many men as did the hussars; and when, at length, the latter were able to disengage themselves, the former did not attempt to follow them. The 7th retired through the 23rd light dragoons, took the first favourable turn off the road, and re-formed in the adjoining field.

During this contest, the French, having become sensible of the evil that might arise from the closely wedged state of the cavalry in the town, began to clear the rear of the most advanced portion of the column, so as to admit of more freedom of movement in case of disaster. A battery of British horse-artillery had taken post close to a house on the height occupied by the heavy cavalry, and on the left of the road; and it was now replying to the French battery on the opposite bank of the river.

So exceedingly elated were the French with having repulsed the 7th hussars in this their first serious encounter with the British cavalry, that immediately on that regiment retiring, the whole column that was in Genappe raised the war cry, and rent the air with shouts of "*En avant!—En avant!*" evincing the greatest impatience to follow up this momentary advantage, and to attack the

supports; for which, indeed, the opportunity appeared very favourable, as the ranks of the latter were suffering considerable annoyance from the well-directed and effective fire of the French guns on the opposite bank of the river. They now abandoned the secure cover to which they had been indebted for their temporary success, and were advancing up the ascent with all the confidence of a fancied superiority, when the Earl of Uxbridge, seizing upon the advantage presented for attacking them while moving up-hill, with their flanks unsupported, and a narrow defile in their rear, and being also desirous of affording the 1st life guards an opportunity of charging, brought forward that regiment through the 23rd light dragoons, who opened out for its passage to the front. The life guards now made their charge. It was truly splendid: its rapid rush down into the enemy's mass, was as terrific in appearance as it was destructive in its effect; for although the French met the attack with firmness, they were utterly unable to hold their ground a single moment, were overthrown with great slaughter, and literally ridden down in such a manner that the road was instantaneously covered with men and horses, scattered in all directions. The life guards, pursuing their victorious course, dashed into Genappe, and drove all before them as far as the opposite outlet of the town. 17th of June.

This brilliant and eminently successful charge

17th of June.

made a deep impression upon the enemy, who now conducted his pursuit with extreme caution. The 23rd light dragoons, which had supported the 1st life guards in their charge, became again the last regiment in the rear-guard, and continued so during the remainder of the retreat. Ponsonby's brigade had deployed to the right of the high road, and the guns were so disposed as to take advantageous positions, retiring *en échiquier*. The enemy, after quitting Genappe, tried to get upon the flanks of the centre retiring column, chiefly upon the right flank; but the Royals, Greys, and Inniskillings, manœuvred beautifully; retiring by alternate squadrons, and covered by their own skirmishers, who completely beat the French light cavalry in that kind of warfare. Finding that from the deep state of the ground, there was not the least danger of his being turned by the enemy, Lord Uxbridge gradually withdrew Ponsonby's brigade to the high road. He kept the light cavalry, protected by the household brigade, as the rear-guard, and slowly retired into the chosen position in front of Waterloo, the guns and rockets constantly plying the enemy's advance, which, although it pressed forward twice or thrice, and made preparations to attack, never ventured to come to close quarters with its opponents; and the column received from it no further molestation.

On arriving at the foot of the Anglo-allied position, the 23rd light dragoons moved off to the

(Allied) right of the high road, and into the hollow in which lies the orchard of the farm of La Haye Sainte. Here they were drawn up, prepared to meet the French advanced guard, should it follow them, or to fall upon its flank, should it venture to continue its march along the road. The latter, however, halted upon the height which intervenes between La Haye Sainte and La Belle Alliance, and opened a fire upon the centre of the Duke of Wellington's line, above the former farm, from two batteries of horse-artillery. Picton, who was then upon the rising ground in rear of La Haye Sainte, and who was intently watching the enemy's advance along the high road, perceived columns of infantry approaching from La Belle Alliance. He immediately took upon himself to unite the two batteries nearest at hand, which were those under Major Lloydd of the British artillery, and Major Cleeves of the King's German legion, (although not belonging to his own division), and to place them in position on the high ground close to the Charleroi road. The guns immediately opened a brisk cannonade upon the French columns, of which they had obtained a most accurate range just as their leading divisions had entered the inclosed space between the high banks which line the high road where it is cut through the height before mentioned as intervening between La Belle Alliance and La Haye Sainte. This mass of the enemy's infantry suffered severely from the fire, to

17th of June.

17th of June. which it stood exposed about half an hour; for the head of the column having been unable to retrograde, in consequence of the pressure from its rear, and prevented by the high bank on either side of the road from filing off to a flank, could not readily extricate itself from so embarrassing a situation. During the whole of this fire, the allied batteries were replied to, though very ineffectually, by the two batteries of French horse-artillery posted on the height in question.

It was now twilight: the approaching darkness was greatly accelerated by the lowering aspect of the sky. Picquets were hastily thrown forward by both armies, and to so great a height had the mutual spirit of defiance arisen, that the near approach of opposing parties, advancing to take up their ground for the night, led to little cavalry-affairs, which, though unproductive of any useful result to either side, were distinguished, on different points of the lines, by a chivalrous bravery which seemed to require a prudent restraint. In one of these affairs, Captain Heyliger* of the 7th hussars, made a very brilliant charge with his troop, and when the Duke of Wellington sent to check him, his Grace desired to be made acquainted with the name of an officer who had displayed so much gallantry. A very spirited charge

* Captain Peter Augustus Heyliger retired from the service on the 30th of March, 1820.

was also made by the left troop of the 2nd light dragoons of the King's German legion, under Lieutenant von Hugo,* who, from the vicinity of Hougomont, boldly rushed up the height intervening between that point and Mon Plaisir, and gallantly drove back a portion of the French advanced guard of cavalry.† 17th of June.

The manner in which the Duke of Wellington withdrew his army from the position of Quatre-Bras to the one of Waterloo, must ever render that retreat a perfect model of operations of this nature, performed in the immediate presence of a powerful enemy. Those dispositions which have been described as having been made by him for the purpose of masking the retirement of the main body, of affording perfect security to the passage of the defile in his rear, and of ensuring the orderly and regular assembly of the several corps on the ground respectively allotted to them in the new position, evince altogether a degree of skill which has never been surpassed. In such operations, the covering of the army by its cavalry and light troops necessarily forms an important feature; and a glance at the manner in which this duty was fulfilled by the Earl of Uxbridge, with the cavalry, horse-artillery, and a few light battalions, at his disposal, is sufficient to show that

* Now Captain Ludolph von Hugo, h.p. Hanoverian service.

† For return of killed, wounded, and missing, of the British troops and King's German legion on the 17th of June—See Appendix XXIX.

17th of June.

the exemplification of such feature on this occasion was exceedingly beautiful. Indeed, so orderly and so perfect were all the arrangements connected with this retreat, from its commencement to its close, that the movements partook more of the appearance of a field-day upon a large scale, than of an operation executed in the actual presence of an enemy; and this was particularly observable as regarded the protection afforded by the cavalry and horse-artillery, which manœuvred to admiration, and in a style that, combined with the brilliant charge by the 1st life-guards at Genappe, evidently impressed the enemy with a due sense of the efficiency of the gallant troops immediately in his front. It may here also be remarked, that the judicious dispositions made by Lord Uxbridge in covering this retreat, and the high degree of confidence with which he inspired the cavalry, afforded well-grounded anticipations of the success likely to attend his measures when conducting that cavalry in the open battle-field, on which, it was foreseen, its prowess would so very soon be tested. The British and German portion of the cavalry was in excellent order, and seemed already to have imbibed, in a high degree, that gallant bearing and chivalrous spirit, which it beheld and admired in its distinguished chief.

In the course of the evening, the Duke received from Prince Blücher a reply to the request he had made for his support in the position

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he was now occupying. It was highly characteristic of the old man, who had written it, in the following terms, on the instant of its receipt, without previously conferring with, or addressing himself to, any one :—"I shall not come with two corps only, but with my whole army ; upon this understanding, however, that should the French not attack us on the 18th, we shall attack them on the 19th."* 17th of June.

The Duke, who, as has already been explained, had, from the commencement of the campaign, considered it very possible that Napoleon would advance by the Mons road, still entertained apprehensions of an attempt on the part of his opponent to turn him by Hal, and seize Brussels by a coup de main. For this, however, he was fully prepared, having made his dispositions for the security of that flank, in the manner pointed out in the following instructions, which he issued to Major General the Hon. Sir Charles Colville :—

'17th June, 1815.

'The army retired this day from its position at Quatre-Bras to its present position in front of Waterloo.

'The brigades of the 4th division, at Braine-le-

* The Prussian officer conveying this communication was brought to head-quarters by an escort from a squadron of the 1st hussars King's German legion, which Vivian had detached to the left, with orders to patrole as far as Ohain.

17th of June. Comte, are to retire at daylight to-morrow morning upon Hal.

'Major General Colville must be guided by the intelligence he receives of the enemy's movements in his march to Hal, whether he moves by the direct route or by Enghien.

'Prince Frederick of Orange is to occupy with his corps the position between Hal and Enghien, and is to defend it as long as possible.

'The army will probably continue in its position in front of Waterloo to-morrow.

'Lieut. Colonel Torrens will inform Lieut. General Sir Charles Colville of the position and situation of the armies.'

The respective lines of picquets and vedettes had scarcely been taken up along the low ground that skirted the front of the Anglo-allied position, and the last gun had just boomed from the heights, when "heaven's artillery," accompanied by vivid flashes of lightning, again pealed forth in solemn and awful grandeur; while the rain, pouring down in torrents, imparted the utmost gloom and discomfort to the bivouacs, which the opposing armies had established for the night, upon the ground destined to become celebrated in history, even to the remotest ages.

CHAPTER VIII.

On the morning of the 17th, the Prussian army continues its retreat upon Wavre—Zieten's corps retires by Mont St. Guibert, and reaches Wavre about mid-day—Pirch's corps follows the same route, and takes post on the right bank of the Dyle—Thielemann, having collected together the brigades of his corps, begins to retire from the field of Ligny at two o'clock in the morning—He halts in rear of Gembloux until two o'clock in the afternoon, when he resumes his march and arrives at the position of Wavre late in the evening—Bülow retires by Walhain and Corbaix to Dion-le-mont, near which it takes up a position—While the Prussians are effecting their retreat during the early part of the morning, the French continue quietly in their bivouac—Pajol, with a light cavalry-division seeks the Prussians along the Namur road, followed by Lieut. General Teste's infantry-division, in support—Other troops detached towards Gembloux, near which traces of the Prussian retreat are discovered—Remarks upon the extraordinary degree of inactivity on the part of Napoleon—About noon, Napoleon proceeds to collect, in advance of Marbais, on the high road to Quatre-Bras, a portion of the troops that had fought at Ligny, and detaches the remainder, under Grouchy, in pursuit of the Prussians—Napoleon's instructions to Grouchy—The troops assembled near Marbais advance upon Quatre-Bras, which they reach about two o'clock—The corps of Vandamme and Gérard do not reach Gembloux until late in the evening—Grouchy's dispositions—Disposition of the Prussian troops during the 17th—Influence of the defeat of Ligny upon the *morale* of the Prussian army—On the 18th, Vandamme's and Gérard's corps commence their march from Gembloux, at nine o'clock, upon Wavre, preceded by the heavy cavalry, under Excelmans, and supported on their left by Maurin's light cavalry—At half-past ten o'clock, Excelmans' advanced guard comes in contact with the Prussian rear-guard—At Sart-à-Wallain Grouchy's attention is called to the sound of a heavy cannonade in the direction of Mont St. Jean—Gérard suggests to Grouchy the expediency of marching towards the cannonade—Grouchy's reasons for rejecting this proposal—The march upon Wavre continued—At day-break of the 18th, Bülow quits his position near Dion-le-mont to march through Wavre upon St. Lambert, and thus commences the flank movement of the Prussians in support of the Anglo-allied army at Waterloo—Dispositions made for giving security to this movement—

Blücher directs that as soon as Bülow's corps has proceeded beyond Wavre, Zieten's corps is to commence its march by Fromont and Ohain to join the left wing of Wellington's army; Pirch's corps to follow Bülow's in the direction of St. Lambert; and Thielemann's to follow Zieten's as soon as its presence at Wavre is no longer essential—The march of Bülow's corps through Wavre delayed by an accident—Bülow's advanced guard crosses the defile of St. Lambert and halts in the wood of Paris—Pirch, having strengthened his rear-guard in consequence of the approach of the French, effects the passage of his corps across the Dyle at Wavre—Blücher's instructions to Thielemann—Remarks upon Grouchy's movements during the 17th, and the early part of the 18th—Their influence upon the battle of Waterloo.

17th of June.

EARLY on the morning of the 17th of June, the Prussian army continued its retreat upon Wavre. Zieten's and Pirch's corps d'armée, (the 1st and 2nd,) which had been collected during the night at Tilly and at Gentinnes, retired by Mont St. Guibert, in rear of which defile the latter corps remained a considerable time as rear-guard, while the former marched on to Wavre, where it arrived about midday, crossed the Dyle, and took up its position at Bierge. Pirch followed the same route, but took post on the right bank of the Dyle, between St. Anne and Aisemont.

At three o'clock in the morning, the troops, which, under the command of General von Jagow, had continued in full possession of Bry and its immediate vicinity during the night, began to retire, in the direction of Tilly, towards their respective corps.

Lieut. Colonel von Sohr, whose cavalry-brigade with half a horse-battery formed the rear-guard of this line of retreat, received orders to take up

a concealed position between Tilly and Gentinnes, thence to watch the movements of the enemy, and, as soon as he found himself pressed by the latter, to fall back upon the defile of Mont St. Guibert. 17th of June.

From the moment it was decided that the 3rd corps should retire by Gembloux, Thielemann began to collect together his widely disseminated brigades, and to draw in his advanced posts, an operation which, executed in the darkness of the night, retarded his departure so much that it was two o'clock in the morning before the reserve-artillery, which formed the head of the column, struck into the road which, at Point du Jour, leads from the Namur chaussée to Gembloux. The rear-guard of this line of retreat, which consisted of the 9th infantry-brigade, under Major General von Borcke, and the reserve-cavalry, under General von Hobe, and was drawn up along the Namur road, having in its front the Fleurus chaussée, leading directly towards the enemy, did not commence its march until after four o'clock, when the sun had risen. The main body of the corps having passed through Gembloux soon after seven o'clock in the morning, Thielemann, who here received a communication from Bülow stating that he had posted the 4th corps about three miles in rear of Gembloux, gave his own corps a halt on that side of the town until two o'clock in the afternoon, in order that his

17th of June. troops might obtain rest and refreshment. At this hour the march was resumed upon Wavre; where the corps arrived late in the evening, and took up its position at La Bavette, leaving the 9th infantry-brigade (General von Borcke) and the cavalry-brigade of Colonel Count Lottum, on the right bank of the Dyle. In this position the corps was now rejoined by Colonel von Marwitz's cavalry-brigade, which had retired by Tilly; as also by the 2nd battalion of the 3rd Kurmark landwehr and the two squadrons of the 6th Kurmark landwehr-cavalry, which troops had been left at Dinant. The squadron of the 7th uhlans that had been detached to Onoz, also joined, but having fallen in with a superior force of the enemy's cavalry, had experienced a great loss. The two squadrons of the 9th hussars, belonging to this corps, had not yet arrived from Ciney.

The advance of Bülow's corps had reached Basse Bodecé, upon the old Roman road, at nightfall of the 16th of June. Here that General became acquainted with the loss of the battle of Ligny; whereupon he ordered the brigades of his corps to be posted at intervals along this road, with the exception of the 13th, (under Lieut. General von Hake,) which was directed to bivouac more to the rear, near Hottoment, where the same road is intersected by that which conducts from Namur to Louvain.

At daybreak of the 17th, Bülow was informed

by Major von Weyrach, an aide-de-camp to Blücher, that the 3rd corps was moving upon Gembloux, and that the 1st and 2nd were on the march towards Wavre. He also received the Prince's orders to proceed by Walhain and Corbaix to Dion-le-mont, and to post the main body of his rear-guard (which consisted of the 14th brigade) at Vieux Sart. The Prince further directed that a detachment, consisting of one regiment of cavalry, two battalions of infantry, and two guns of horse-artillery, should be sent to the defile of Mont St. Guibert, to act, in the first instance as a support to Lieut. Colonel von Sohr, who was at Tilly, and then, upon the latter falling back, to act as rear-guard in this direction. Lieut. Colonel von Ledebur was accordingly detached upon this duty with the 10th hussars, the fusilier-battalions of the 11th regiment of infantry and 1st regiment of Pomeranian landwehr, together with two guns from the horse-battery No. 12. The corps itself moved directly upon Dion-le-mont, and on reaching the height near that town, on which is situated the public-house of A tous vents, took up a position close to the intersection of the roads leading to Louvain, Wavre, and Gembloux. 17th of June.

While the Prussians were thus effecting their retreat in good order, along the cross roads of that part of the country, (high road there was none,) no corresponding activity manifested itself on the part of the French, whom the morning's dawn

17th of June. found still lying in their bivouac. Their vedettes stood within half a mile of the columns of Thielemann's rear-guard, the retreat of which, not having commenced until after sunrise, might have been easily remarked, and had the French detached but the smallest patrole, they could not have failed to discover the direction of that retreat—whether towards Namur or Gembloux. It was not until after Thielemann had retired a sufficient distance to escape further notice that any disposition for movement occurred to disturb the perfect quietude of their repose. Then, Pajol with a division of his light cavalry-corps, under Lieut. General Soolt, consisting of the 1st, 4th, and 5th hussars, was detached in pursuit of the Prussians. He struck into the Namur road, and shortly afterwards Lieut. General Teste's infantry-division of Lobau's corps, (the 6th,) followed in support, and took up a position on the heights of Mazy. Pajol had not proceeded very far when he perceived a Prussian battery retiring upon Namur, which he lost no time in capturing and forwarding to headquarters; where the circumstance strengthened the belief that Blücher had retreated by that road. It was the Prussian horse-battery No. 14, belonging to the 2nd corps, which, having towards the end of the battle expended every shot, had driven off the field to procure a fresh supply of ammunition, but had not succeeded in falling in with the reserve ammunition-waggons. The battery

neither returned to its own corps, nor did it comply with Thielemann's express order to march upon Gembloux, but consumed much time in uselessly driving first in one direction, and then in another. It was accompanied at this moment by a squadron of the 7th Prussian uhlans, which the 3rd corps had neglected to recall from Onoz. The squadron retired on the approach of the French cavalry, and escaped with a loss of 30 men; but all the guns fell into the hands of the enemy. Pajol, feeling at last some reason to doubt that Namur was a point in the Prussian retreat, diverged from the high road, and proceeded to St. Denis, where he was joined by Teste's division. A brigade of Excelmans' cavalry-corps had been detached to offer support to Pajol, should the latter require it, but in consequence of certain information, gained upon the road, it was subsequently directed to proceed towards Gembloux, on approaching which it discovered traces of the Prussian retreat. 17th of June.

Grouchy, who commanded the right wing of the French army in Napoleon's absence, repaired early in the morning to the Emperor's quarters, at Fleurus, for instructions, according to an order he had received to that effect on the previous evening. He was desired to wait and accompany the Emperor, who was going to visit the field of battle. The latter, however, did not start from Fleurus until between eight and nine o'clock, and on reaching St. Amand, he examined the approaches by

17th of June. which this village had been attacked the day before; then, he rode about the field, gave directions for the care of the wounded; and, as he passed in front of different regiments that were falling in without arms, on the ground where they were bivouacked, he was received with loud cheers. He addressed himself to nearly all the corps, and assured them of the lively satisfaction he had felt on witnessing their conduct in the battle. Having dismounted, he conversed freely, and at great length, with Grouchy and Gérard, on the state of public opinion in Paris, the different political parties, and on various other subjects quite unconnected with those military operations upon the successful issue of which depended the stability of his present power.

That Napoleon should have neglected to follow up the advantages which fortune had thrown in his way on the morning of the 17th of June, is quite incomprehensible. With the exception of a Prussian picquet at Gentinnes, his whole front, as far as Gembloux, was perfectly clear of an enemy. Wellington was still in position at Quatre-Bras, where his left had become exposed by the retreat of the Prussians, and in rear of which point was the defile of Genappe. There was nothing to prevent Napoleon from marching directly upon that defile, and supporting, by a vigorous attack upon the Anglo-allied left and rear, a simultaneous movement against the front by the force under

Ney. Whither had fled the mighty spirit which had shone forth with such dazzling brilliancy in former wars, and which had never displayed the energy of its powers of combination, and activity in following up successes, more eminently than in the campaign of the previous year? When before did it omit pressing every advantage to the utmost, or neglect to seize that moment of time, in which, having defeated one portion of his enemies, he was enabled to fall with combined force upon another? His army was not more fatigued than was that of Wellington, which had arrived at Quatre-Bras by forced marches. The troops which he subsequently did lead upon that point, when it was too late, consisting chiefly of the imperial guard and the 6th corps, were comparatively fresh. The former had not been engaged at Ligny until towards the termination of the action, when they suffered scarcely any loss; the latter, which arrived later, had remained intact. The idea of forming a junction with Ney, with a view of attacking Wellington, was certainly entertained; but its execution was most unaccountably and unnecessarily delayed until its intended effect could not but fall powerless upon a vigilant enemy, fully prepared, by having improved the precious moments of time, thus lost, to detect the purpose of the movement, and to ward off the intended blow. 17th of June.

With an army greatly inferior in numbers to the united forces of his adversaries, Napoleon's

17th of June. prospects of success rested exclusively upon his utmost skill and address, not only in preventing that union of force, but also in so planning, arranging, and executing his combinations, that having succeeded in defeating one opponent with a superior mass, he might then precipitate himself in like manner upon another, at the very moment when the latter might be occupied or engaged with one of his marshals. This would have exacted of him the most untiring energy, the application of all his great resources in strategical science, a lightning-swift decision, and a daring resolution both in adopting and in executing all his movements. It was by the exercise of such powerful mental resources as these, that, unaided by a sufficiently corresponding amount of physical force, he had conducted the campaign of 1814; but the spirit by which they were conceived, and the genius which instinctively seized the means of their execution, seemed to have abandoned him in this, his last, campaign: a faint gleam of the old spirit was visible in its opening movements, but it was now rather a wildfire, dazzling him for a moment, on the downward path to his destiny, than the star which had so often led him to victory. The last flash of his genius was brief, and, on the memorable plains of Fleurus, seemed to disappear, and leave him in utter darkness.

The same fatal inactivity which had marked the French Emperor's proceedings on the evening of

the 15th, and during the morning of the 16th,* again manifested itself upon the 17th of June; and it was not until nearly noon on this day, upon receiving the report of a reconnaissance, made in the direction of Quatre-Bras, and upon learning that a considerable body of Prussians had been discovered at Gembloux, that he made any disposition for the movement of his troops, beyond the previous detaching of Pajol's light cavalry in pursuit of the Prussians, along the Namur road. He now ordered the following troops to proceed to occupy a position in advance of Marbais, across the Namur road, facing Quatre-Bras:—Lobau's infantry-corps, (the 6th,) with the exception of the 21st division, under Lieut. General Teste, which had already been detached in support of Pajol; Milhaud's corps of heavy cavalry (cuirassiers); Lieut. General Subervie's light cavalry-brigade, from Pajol's corps; the 3rd light cavalry-division, (belonging to the 3rd corps,) under Lieut. General Domont, and the imperial guard, both cavalry and infantry. To Marshal Grouchy he confided the pursuit of the Prussians, and for this purpose he placed at his disposal as great an extent of force as his limited means would admit: a force, certainly not sufficient to enable that Marshal to confront the whole Prussian army, should the latter, after having rallied and concentrated its strength,

17th of June.

* See the concluding portion of Chapter IV.

17th of June. make a stand against him, but quite so to enable him to watch its movements, and to manœuvre so as to maintain his communication with the main army, and, if pressed by superior numbers, to effect a junction with Napoleon.

The following were the troops thus detached under Grouchy:—

	Infantry.	Cavalry.	Artillery.	Guns.
3rd corps, General Vandamme .	13,200	*	1,292	32
4th corps, General Gérard . .	12,100	1,400	1,292	38
21st division, (6th corps,) Lieut. General Teste . . .	3,300		285	8
4th division (1st cavalry-corps,) Lieut. General Pajol . .		1,250	150	6
2nd cavalry-corps, Lieut. General Excelmans		2,500	300	12
	28,600	5,150	3,319	96
Deduct loss on 16th . . .	3,900	800	400	
Total . .	24,700	4,350	2,919	96

31,969 men and 96 guns.

The 7th infantry division, under Lieut. General Girard, (belonging to the 2nd corps,) having suffered very severely in the battle, was left upon the field.†

Napoleon's instructions to Grouchy were extremely simple and concise: "Pursue the Prus-

* The 3rd light cavalry-division, commanded by Lieut. General Domont, which belonged to this corps was, on the 17th and 18th, with the main army under Napoleon.

† It is very doubtful whether Girard's division was *purposely* left at

sians, complete their defeat by attacking them as soon as you come up with them, and never let them out of your sight. I am going to unite the remainder of this portion of the army with Marshal Ney's corps, to march against the English, and to fight them if they should hold their ground between this and the forest of Soignies. You will communicate with me by the paved road which leads to Quatre-Bras."* No particular direction was prescribed, because the Emperor was totally ignorant of the real line of the Prussian retreat. At the same time he was strongly impressed with the idea that Blücher had retired upon Namur and Liege, with a view to occupy the line of the Meuse, whence he might seriously endanger the right of the French army, as also its main line of operation, should it advance upon Brussels.† 17th of June.

Grouchy did not hesitate to remark to the Emperor, that the Prussians, having commenced their

Ligny. It had not been included among either the troops ordered to Marbais, or those placed under Grouchy's orders; its commander had been mortally wounded; and the corps to which it belonged had been with Ney on the 15th and 16th, and was still at Frasne; which circumstances warrant the probability of its having been forgotten. Besides, Napoleon could very ill spare even the smallest detachment to guard the field of battle and look after the wounded,—the duty stated by certain French historians to have been assigned to this division.

* "Observations sur la Relation de la Campagne de 1815 publiée par le Général Gourgaud; par le Comte de Grouchy."

† In the first despatch from Soult to Ney, on the morning of the 17th, the following passage occurs:—"L'armée Prussienne a été mise en déroute. Le Général Pajol est à sa poursuite sur les routes de *Namur* et de *Liège*."—See Appendix XXVII.

17th of June. retreat at ten o'clock the previous night, had gained several hours' start of the troops with which he was to follow them; that although the reports received from the advanced cavalry conveyed no positive information as to the direction in which the great mass of the Prussian army had effected its retreat, appearances as yet seemed to justify the supposition that Blücher had fallen back upon Namur; and that as he would thus have to pursue in a direction contrary to that which Napoleon was himself going to take, with very little chance of being able to prevent the execution of any dispositions the Prussians might have resolved upon, when quitting the field of battle, he begged to be allowed to follow the Emperor in his projected movement upon Quatre-Bras. Napoleon declined to entertain this proposition, repeated the order he had already given to him, adding that it rested with him (Grouchy) to discover the route taken by the Prussians, whose defeat he was to complete by attacking them the moment he came up with them; while he himself would proceed to fight the English.*

* It is worthy of remark that both Napoleon's Marshals, to whom he had confided the command of detached corps, were of opinion that, on the 17th he should have attacked the Anglo-allied army at Quatre-Bras and Genappe, with his combined force; and there can be no doubt that such opinion was in accordance with the first principles of strategy. It is of course to be understood that in that case, both Pajol's and Excelmans' cavalry-corps would have been left to maintain a vigilant watch upon the Prussian movements, as also an uninterrupted communication with the main army; and another essential point would have been, an earlier co-operation

The order was immediately given for the advance of the troops previously assembled near Marbais, preceded by Lieut. General Subervie's division of light cavalry, as advanced-guard. By the time they reached Quatre-Bras, which was about two o'clock, the whole of Wellington's infantry had crossed the Genappe, and was retiring along the high road to Brussels, protected by the cavalry, which was now pressed by the French, in the manner described in the preceding chapter. 17th of June.

The march of the French troops through Bry, in the direction of Quatre-Bras, became known to the Prussians through Lieut. Colonel von Sohr, who still held his cavalry-brigade, even at this time, posted in rear of Tilly. Shortly afterwards, some of the French cavalry having approached, he began to retire slowly towards Mont St. Guibert, and, as he frequently formed up, in wait for the enemy, he did not reach that point until the evening of the 17th. Here he found Lieut. Colonel von Ledebur, who had arrived with his detachment, and had received orders to maintain the defile.

Upon the departure of Napoleon, Grouchy ordered Vandamme and Gérard to get their corps

of Napoleon's and Ney's forces. Should this co-operation have led to a complete overthrow of the Anglo-allied army, Napoleon might then have moved again, with his combined mass, upon the Prussians at Wavre, leaving two cavalry-corps, in this case, on his left, to watch the movements of Wellington.

17th of June. under arms, and to move them, in the first instance, to the junction of the Gembloux road with that to Namur; and having subsequently received intelligence that a considerable body of Prussians had passed through the former town, he desired that those two corps should continue their movement upon that point. In the mean time he repaired to the advanced posts of Excelmans' dragoons, which were by this time beyond Gembloux. It was part of this cavalry which followed Lieut. Colonel von Sohr, on the left. They merely threw out skirmishers against him, and, as night set in, they abandoned the pursuit in this direction.

The corps of Vandamme and Gérard did not reach Gembloux until very late in the evening. The former was posted in advance, the latter, in rear, of the town; near which also, and on the right bank of the Ormeau, was stationed the 6th light cavalry-division, under General Vallin, who succeeded to the command, upon Lieut. General Morin being wounded at the battle of Ligny. The 1st brigade of Lieut. General Chastel's 10th cavalry-division, consisting of the 4th and 12th dragoons, under General Bonnemain, was pushed on to Sart-à-Wallain, and the 15th dragoons (from General Vincent's brigade of the 9th cavalry-division, under Lieut. General Soult,) were detached to Perwès. From both these points, reports were sent into Gembloux that the Prussians had retired upon Wavre. Pajol, with his light cavalry

and Teste's infantry-division, had returned from St. Denis, between Namur and Gembloux, to the original position occupied by the latter in the morning, at Mazy, in the immediate vicinity of the field of Ligny; a movement for which no satisfactory cause has ever been assigned. 17th of June.

The extent of information obtained by Grouchy concerning the Prussian retreat, and the nature of the dispositions which he adopted in consequence, will be best explained by the following despatch, which he addressed to the Emperor :—

'Gembloux, le 17 Juin,
à dix heures du soir.

'Sire—J'ai l'honneur de vous rendre compte que j'occupe Gembloux et que ma cavalerie est à Sauveniéres. L'ennemi, fort d'environ trente mille hommes, continue son mouvement de retraite ; ou lui a saisi ici un parc de 400 bêtes à cornes, des magasins et des bagages.

'Il paraît d'après tous les rapports, qu'arrivés à Sauvenières, les Prussiens se sont divisés eu deux colonnes : l'une a dû prendre la route de Wavre, en passant par Sart-à-Wallain, l'autre colonne paraît s'être dirigée sur Perwès.

'Ou peut peutêtre en inférer qu'une portion va joindre Wellington, et que le centre, qui est l'armée de Blücher, se retire sur Liège : une autre colonne avec de l'artillerie ayant fait son mouvement de retraite par Namur, le Général Excelmans a ordre de pousser ce soir six escadrons sur Sart-à-Wallain et trois escadrons sur Perwès. D'aprés leur rapport, si la masse des Prussiens se retire sur Wavre, je la suivrai dans cette direction, afin qu'ils ne puissent pas gagner Bruxelles, et de les séparer de Wellington.

'Si, au contraire, mes renseignemens prouvent que la principale force Prussienne a marché sur Perwès, je me dirigerai par cette ville à la poursuite de l'ennemi.

17th of June.

'Les Généraux Thielman et Borstell faisaient partie de l'armée que Votre Majesté a battue hier; ils étaient encore ce matin à 10 heures ici, et ont annoncé que vingt mille hommes des leurs avaient été mis hors de combat. Ils ont demandé en partant les distances de Wavre, Perwés et Hannut. Blücher a été blessé légèrement au bras, ce qui ne l'a pas empêché de continuer à commander après s'être fait panser. Il n'a point passé par Gembloux.

'Je suis avec respect,
de Votre Majesté,
'Sire,
le fidèle sujet,
'Le Márechal Comte de GROUCHY.'*

Although the information conveyed in this despatch was incorrect on some points, and imperfect on others, inasmuch as it represented that Prussian columns had retired upon Namur and Perwès, which was not the case, and gave no account of the columns (1st and 2nd corps) which had retreated by Tilly and Gentinnes, still it was well calculated to satisfy Napoleon, that at least the spirit of his instructions had been understood by the Marshal. The latter had stated that he suspected a portion of the Prussian troops was proceeding to join Wellington, and that, should he ascertain through his cavalry detached to Sart-à-

* This despatch is given in the "Dernières observations sur les opérations de l'aile droite de l'armée Française à la bataille de Waterloo, en réponse à M. le Marquis de Grouchy, par le Général Gérard." It is accompanied by the following certificate:—"Certifié conforme à l'original qui nous a été remis par l'Empereur Napoléon, et qui est entre nos mains.
"*Signé*, le Général GOURGAUD."

Wallain and Perwès that the great mass of the Prussians was retiring upon Wavre, it was his intention to pursue them in that direction, 'so as to prevent them from reaching Brussels, and to keep them separated from Wellington.' Four hours afterwards (that is, at two o'clock on the morning of the 18th) he sent off another despatch to the Emperor, reporting that he had decided on marching upon either Corbaix or Wavre. 17th of June.

The retreat of the Prussian army, after its defeat at Ligny on the 16th of June, was conducted with great skill, and executed in very good order. By detaining Thielemann's corps upon the field of battle until the morning of the 17th, ample security was afforded to the line of retreat by Gembloux; and by not withdrawing Bülow's corps from that town until Thielemann drew near to it, the distance between the main bodies of these two corps became so limited as to present the ready means of opposing their combined force to a vigorous pursuit, should such be attempted. By the evening of the 17th, the entire Prussian army had assembled in the immediate vicinity of Wavre—two corps on the right, and the remaining two corps on the left, bank of the Dyle—in perfect order, and fully prepared to resume the offensive. Upon the two lines of retreat, the rear-guards were well disposed at Vieux Sart and Mont St. Guibert; where they continued during that night,

17th of June. and whence they retired leisurely on the following day. On the Prussian left, patroles were despatched towards the main road leading from Namur to Louvain. On the right, a detachment was sent from Zieten's corps to Limale, on the left bank of the Dyle, to cover that flank, and patroles were pushed higher up the river, to communicate with the post of Mont St. Guibert. Major von Falkenhausen had been detached, during the day, to Seroulx, for the purpose of reconnoitring the country in the vicinity of Genappe, and of the high road to Brussels; and he succeeded in discovering, from the wooded tracts beyond Seroulx, the advance of the French army along the chaussée. Patroles were also detached towards Lasne, Couture, and Aywiers, to observe the defiles along the rivulet of the Lasne.

Such were the dispositions of the defeated Prussians on the evening of the 17th, while the victorious French had not advanced beyond Gembloux. The former had fallen back, in good order, upon a line with, and at a short distance from, the Anglo-allied army on their right, while their opponents, though encountering no obstacle of importance, had made but little progress, and were widely diverging from, instead of closely co-operating with, the main army from which they had been detached. These dispositions, so ably planned and so efficiently performed, were well calculated to facili-

tate the grand operation of the morrow, namely, Blücher's flank movement to the right, to effect a junction with Wellington. 17th of June.

The retreat to Wavre did not in any way incapacitate the Prussian army for the resumption of actively offensive operations. With respect to its material, it so happened that the park of reserve ammunition-waggons had, in the first instance, been directed upon Gembloux; and Colonel von Röhl, who superintended the ordnance department of the army, sent his aide-de-camp during the night of the 16th to conduct this reserve to Wavre; whilst he himself hastened to the latter town, for the purpose of putting the whole of the artillery, accordingly as it arrived there, again in a fit state for action. The supply of ammunition, however, was necessarily incomplete; but in order to prevent any failure in this respect, should some mishap occur to the park of reserve ammunition-waggons, a courier was despatched to Maestricht, with directions for the speedy transport of a supply of ammunition from thence to the army, by means of the common waggons of the country. Similar orders were conveyed to Cologne, Wesel, and Münster; and, by way of precaution, an express was sent to Liege for the removal of the battering-train to Maestricht, as also for the destruction, in case of danger, of the iron-foundry in the arsenal of the former place. Fortunately, however, the reserve ammunition-waggons reached Wavre safely

17th of June. at five o'clock in the afternoon of the 17th. The corps and batteries were furnished with a complete supply of ammunition, and the army was thus placed in a perfectly efficient state for commencing another battle.

As regards the influence which the defeat at Ligny exercised over the *morale* of the Prussian army, its injurious effects were made manifest amongst the newly raised drafts from the Rhenish and Westphalian provinces, and from the duchy of Berg. Of these troops, 8,000 men betook themselves to a flight which admitted of no check until they reached Liege and Aix-la-Chapelle. Among the Rhenish troops, particularly those from provinces which had formerly belonged to France, there were many old French soldiers; and although several of them fought with great bravery, others evinced a bad disposition, and there were instances in which they passed over to their former companions in arms. Such, however, was not the case with the troops from the other western districts of the Prussian state: there was scarcely a single man amongst the missing, who belonged to any of the old Westphalian provinces, Mark, Cleve, Minden, and Ravensberg, whilst several came from that of Münster.

But the *morale* of the great mass of the Prussian army continued undiminished. The spirit of the troops was neither tamed nor broken; and their enthusiasm, though damped, had not been subdued.

Unbounded confidence was placed in the firm decision and restless energy of their aged and venerated chief, who, though suffering from the effects of his fall, by which his whole frame had sustained a severe shock, evinced not the slightest apprehension of fatal consequences to the campaign resulting from this defeat. His unbending nature led him to cast aside for the moment those purely political interests and theoretically strategical principles, by which a more cautious and less enterprising commander might have been induced to secure the line of the Meuse, and to preserve his direct communications with the Prussian states, and thus afford but a doubtful and an inefficient support to his ally. Placing full reliance on the resources of his own mind, and on the stern, warlike character of his troops, he devoted his whole energies to the attainment of the one grand object —that of crushing Napoleon by combining with Wellington. This confidence in himself and in his soldiers was strikingly and characteristically manifested in the concluding words of a general order which he issued to the army on the morning of the 17th. "I shall immediately lead you against the enemy;—we shall beat him, because it is our duty to do so." 17th of June.

At five o'clock on the morning of the 18th, Pajol started from Mazy, with Soult's cavalry-division and Teste's infantry-division, marching by St. Denis and Grand-lez, to Tourinnes; where he

18th of June. was to await further orders. At about eight o'clock, Excelmans' corps of heavy cavalry, consisting of eight regiments of dragoons, was put in motion; and at nine o'clock, Vandamme's and Gérard's infantry-corps began their march along one and the same road, by Sart-à-Wallain, upon Wavre. The left of this column was protected, towards the Dyle, by the advance of Morin's division of light cavalry, under General Vallin.

It was about half-past ten o'clock, when Excelmans' advanced guard came up with the Prussian rear-guard, on the road to Wavre. He immediately formed his troops in position, resting their left upon the wooded ravine near the farm of La Plaquerie, and their right in the direction of Neuf-Sart. While his skirmishers were engaged with those of the enemy, he sent the *chef d'escadron* d'Estourmel, to inform the Marshal of what was going on in front, and also to make known to him that the Prussian army had continued its retreat upon Wavre during a part of the night and that morning, for the purpose of forming a closer communication with the Duke of Wellington's forces.

The march of the 3rd and 4th corps was greatly retarded by the bad state of the roads, and frequent halts were occasioned by the narrowness and miry nature of the defiles. Gérard, having preceded the column, reached Sart-à-Wallain at eleven o'clock, where he found Grouchy breakfasting in the house of M. Hollaërt, a notary. In about half

an hour after his arrival, Colonel Simon Lorière, who was acting as his chief of the staff, suddenly heard, while walking in the garden of the house, a distant but violent cannonade, of which he immediately went to apprise his General. Grouchy repaired at once to the garden, accompanied by Gérard, Vandamme, Excelmans, and several other officers. He immediately called for M. Hollaërt, and asked him in what part of the country he considered this tremendous cannonade to be going on. The latter, pointing to the forest of Soignies, replied that it must be in the direction of Planchenoit, Mont St. Jean, and that vicinity. 18th of June.

Gérard then declared his opinion to be in favour of the expediency of marching in the direction of the cannonade, in order to connect the movements of the detached force more closely with Napoleon's operations; and offered to lead his own corps towards the battle. This measure was opposed by the Marshal, as also by General Baltus, of the artillery, who represented the difficulties of a march in which this arm might be compromised. On the other hand, General Valazé, commanding Engineer of Gêrard's corps, after having coincided in the opinion expressed by the latter, observed that he had three companies of sappers, by aid of which he could remove many obstacles. Gérard then gave his assurance that he could at all events move on with the gun-carriages and limbers. Grouchy, however, stated his determination to act

18th of June. in conformity with his instructions, which were, to pursue and attack the Prussians, and never to lose sight of them. It had just been intimated to him that his troops had come up with a rear-guard of the enemy's infantry, and he did not consider his information was sufficient to warrant the conclusion that Blücher was drawn up, in expectation of being attacked by him at Wavre; or that he would continue his retreat upon Brussels; or, that if, in manœuvring to effect his junction with Wellington, he would do so in front, or in rear, of the Forest of Soignies. He has since declared,* that he did not deem it his duty to follow the counsel given by Gérard, but to attack the Prussians; that to effect the proposed movement with the whole of his forces would have been acting contrary to his orders; that to have detached only a portion of those forces in the direction of the Forest of Soignies, would have been to separate the two corps of his army by a river, whose waters were swollen by the rain, and whose banks were swampy, and thus have rendered their mutual support impossible, however essential it might have become; finally, that a war of inspiration appertains alone to the General in chief, and that his lieutenants must confine themselves to that of execution. Hence the march to Wavre was continued.

* "Fragments historiques relatifs à la campagne de 1815, &c. Par le Général Grouchy."

Whilst proceeding to the advanced guard, Grouchy received a despatch, dated from the farm of Caillou, the 18th of June, at ten o'clock in the morning; acquainting him that the Emperor was going to attack the Anglo-allied army, in its position at Waterloo; desiring him to direct his movements upon Wavre in such a manner as to draw his forces nearer to those of Napoleon, and, especially, to keep up a close communication with the latter.* The receipt of these instructions was not followed by any immediate change in Grouchy's dispositions. He despatched no cavalry force—not even a single patrole—to watch any movements that might be attempted, or actually then in course of execution, by the Prussians, towards the field on which the Emperor had intimated to him his intention of attacking the force under Wellington; and hence it is almost needless to add, that he neglected to establish that close and active communication with the main army which was so essentially important for the accomplishment of the object of the general plan of operations, and to which Napoleon had especially directed his attention in the before mentioned despatch. His sole aim seemed to be, a direct advance upon Wavre; and this he carried into execution without at all detaching to, or in any way manœuvring by, his left. On the contrary, upon arriving in person

18th of June.

* See commencement of Chapter X.

18th of June. at the position occupied by Excelmans, he desired the latter to move to his right, and take post at Dion-le-Mont; and the ground thus vacated was shortly afterwards taken up by Vallin's light cavalry-division.

At daybreak of the 18th of June, Bülow, in conformity with an order which he had received during the previous night from Blücher, quitted his position near Dion-le-Mont, to march through Wavre to St. Lambert. This was the commencement of the important flank movement of the Prussians in support of the Anglo-allied army in position in front of Waterloo; and every measure of precaution was adopted with a view to its being carried into effect with certainty and safety. The sun had not yet risen when Major von Witowsky was despatched with a detachment of the 2nd Silesian hussars, to Maransart, for the purpose of closely reconnoitring the defiles of the Lasne, which had already been patroled the evening before, and to observe the country in front of those defiles, in the direction of the enemy's position. Major von Falkenhausen, previously mentioned as having pushed a reconnaissance beyond Seroulx on the 17th, was now directed also to reconnoitre the Lasne. Scouring parties were sent out, which kept up the communication that had been opened the previous day with Lieut. Colonel von Ledebur at Mont St. Guibert: the whole country between the Dyle and the Charleroi high road was carefully

explored; and correct intelligence was continually sent to the rear concerning the French army. 18th of June.

By means of this vigilant look-out, the Prussians secured the important advantage of retarding the communications between the French Emperor and his Marshal, since it compelled the bearer of despatches to pursue a very circuitous route.

The Prussians very soon discovered that the French had made no disposition whatever for the protection of their right flank. Major von Witowsky had proceeded as far as Maransart before he fell in with an enemy's patrole; and Major von Falkenhausen found the defiles of the Lasne perfectly free and unobserved. Upon receiving this intelligence, Blücher decided upon supporting the Anglo-allied army, by directing the march of his whole force, or at least of three corps, towards the wood of Paris, and debouching from thence upon the flank and rear of the enemy; and Major von Lützow was immediately despatched for the purpose of narrowly watching, from the other side of the above wood, the French movements directed against the position of the Anglo-allied army.

No report had as yet been received from the rear-guard, concerning Grouchy's advance, and as Blücher's great object was now to gain the defiles of the Lasne without interruption, and to occupy in force the wood of Paris, he determined to avail himself of the time and opportunity which offered for the projected movement. Being, however, un-

18th of June. certain as to the amount of Grouchy's force, the Prince deemed it advisable that Wavre should not be abandoned until the greater part of the army had passed the defiles of St. Lambert; and, with this view, he directed that as soon as Bülow's corps should have proceeded beyond Wavre, Zieten's corps was to commence its march by Fromont and Ohain to join the left wing of Wellington's army near La Haye. Pirch's corps was ordered to follow Bülow's, in the direction of St. Lambert; and Thielemann's corps, after retaining possession of the defile of Wavre sufficiently long to render the general movement of the army secure, was then gradually to follow Zieten's corps upon Ohain.

An unfortunate incident occurred during the passage of Bülow's corps through Wavre, which materially impeded the march of the troops. The advanced guard, consisting of the 15th brigade, (under General von Losthin,) with the 2nd Silesian hussars, and a 12-pounder battery, had scarcely passed through the town, when a fire broke out in the main street, and extended itself with great rapidity. This not only caused a suspension of the march of the main body of the corps, but created much alarm, in consequence of the great number of ammunition-waggons in the place. Every exertion was made to extinguish the fire. The 1st battalion of the 14th regiment, under Major von Löwenfield, and the 7th pioneer-

company, were ordered upon this duty, and after they had encountered considerable difficulty, their efforts were crowned with success. 18th of June.

In the mean time, the advanced guard of Bülow's corps had continued its march, and reached St. Lambert by eleven o'clock. The 16th, and then the 13th, brigade arrived much later; and the 14th brigade, which formed the rear-guard, was a long way behind. The advanced guard did not await the arrival of the other brigades, but proceeded forthwith to cross the defile of St. Lambert. Having effected the passage, which was attended with great difficulty, in consequence of the soft and miry state of the valley, it halted in the wood of Paris, where it continued a considerable time, waiting for the approach of the main body. Patroles, however, from the 2nd Silesian hussars, were immediately sent forward to feel for the Anglo-allied left, and to reconnoitre the French right.

Zieten's corps (the 1st) commenced its march, upon the left bank of the Dyle, towards Ohain, about noon.

Whilst Bülow's reserve-cavalry, following the 13th infantry-brigade, was passing through Wavre, French cavalry had penetrated between the rear-guard of this corps, at Vieux Sart, and the detachment under Lieut. Colonel von Ledebur at Mont St. Guibert. The 2nd Pomeranian, and the 1st Silesian, landwehr-cavalry, were immediately

18th of June. detached from the reserve-cavalry of the corps, to aid in checking the advance of the enemy.

The Prussian Lieut. Colonel von Ledebur, who was still at Mont St. Guibert, having received intelligence of the approach of the French, decided on commencing his retreat towards Wavre. Lieut. Colonel von Sohr, who had fallen back early in the morning from Mont. St. Guibert, sent 150 cavalry and 2 guns of horse-artillery as a reinforcement to Ledebur. The latter now succeeded in forming a junction with the two cavalry-regiments detached from the reserve, as also, subsequently, with the cavalry-brigade under Sohr, after a slight affair with the 3rd French corps, (Vandamme's,) whilst making good his retreat to Auzel.

Pirch's corps (the 2nd) broke up from its position between St. Anne and Aisemont, on the right bank of the Dyle, about noon, for the purpose of passing the defile of Wavre. The 1st battalion of the 14th regiment, which occupied this town, was relieved by a battalion of the 30th regiment, belonging to the 3rd corps (Thielemann's). Pirch had just put his corps in motion, with a view to cross the Dyle by the town of Wavre, when the approach of the enemy was announced. The defile was crowded with the troops; the progress of their march could not be otherwise than slow; and at this moment Lieut. Colonel von Sohr, whose brigade formed the rear-guard of the corps, sent in word, that the enemy presented a force of six

regiments of cavalry, ten pieces of artillery, and two strong columns of infantry. 18th of June.

The wood of Sarats, close to the farm of Auzel, was now occupied by some battalions of the 8th brigade, the command of which had devolved upon Colonel von Reckow. Pirch placed the whole of the rear-guard under the orders of General von Brause, the commander of the 7th brigade, and reinforced Lieut. Colonel von Sohr with the 11th hussars and four pieces of horse-artillery. Brause posted the remaining battalions of the 8th brigade in rear of the wood, and the three regiments of cavalry on the right, with the foot-battery No. 12 in their front. The 7th brigade, deployed into line, remained in reserve.

Lieut. Colonel von Ledebur retired slowly before the enemy, and formed a junction with the 8th brigade, under Colonel von Reckow, who maintained his position until three o'clock in the afternoon, against the advanced guard of Vandamme's corps. Between three and four o'clock, General von Brause ordered the retreat. Lieut. Colonel von Sohr crossed the bridge at the mill of Bierge, which was occupied by two companies of the 2nd battalion of the 14th regiment; and then followed the reserve-cavalry of Pirch's corps, to which his brigade belonged, but which he did not overtake until he reached the field of Waterloo. The enemy did not advance with much vigour: the retreat was conducted with perfect order, and

18th of June. the fusilier-battalion of the 1st Pomeranian landwehr, under Major von Krüger, distinguished itself on the occasion. After the passage of the river had been effected, the 1st battalion of the Elbe landwehr remained at Bierge until the bridge was destroyed and the mill set on fire. The 11th hussars and the 2nd battalion of the Elbe landwehr were posted in observation of the passages across the Dyle, and did not rejoin the corps before the following day.

Blücher had quitted Wavre before eleven o'clock in the forenoon, and repaired to the vicinity of Limale, in order to make himself acquainted with the nature of the country in the direction of St. Lambert. Whilst here, he received intelligence of the approach of the enemy towards Wavre. Colonel von Clausewitz, chief of the staff of the 3rd corps, was immediately made the bearer of an order for Thielemann to defend the position at this place, in the event of the enemy advancing in force; but, should the latter cross the Dyle higher up the stream, or not appear in great strength, (a point concerning which nothing positive was then known,) he was to leave only a few battalions in position at Wavre, and to follow the main army, with his corps, as a reserve, in the direction of Couture.

Grouchy's movements, on the 17th and 18th, form so important a feature in the history of this campaign, and exercised so important an influence

upon the fate of the decisive battle of Waterloo, that it becomes an essential point in the study of that history, to examine how far he complied with, and carried into effect, the instructions received from his master, and to what degree his proceedings, consequent upon his ascertaining the direction of the Prussian retreat, coincided with the general plan and object of Napoleon's operations. On a reference to the account of his transactions during the 17th, given in the despatch written at ten o'clock on that night, it appears he was completely ignorant of the line by which the principal mass of the Prussian army had retreated, namely, that of Tilly and Gentinnes, by Zieten's and Pirch's corps, although his cavalry had driven back the Prussian detachment from the latter place to Mont St. Guibert, but from whence it seems to have been withdrawn in the night. His attention seems to have been much less devoted to this quarter than it was to his right, in which direction he detached as far as Perwès. The main body of his forces did not proceed further than Gembloux on the 17th, that is, about five miles from the field of Ligny. Upon a first consideration, we are strongly impressed by the striking contrast between this march, in pursuit of a defeated army, which had commenced its retreat on the previous night, and which presented no check to the advance, and the march of Napoleon, from the same field, by Quatre-Bras and Genappe, as far as La Belle

17th of June.

17th of June. Alliance, in front of the Waterloo position, a distance of about sixteen or seventeen miles; and this, too, in rear of a victorious army, with a cavalry rear-guard boldly and successfully impeding the advance of its pursuers. It must, however, be taken into account, that in one most important respect Napoleon possessed a decided advantage over Grouchy—an advantage, the magnitude of which increased with every moment that elapsed after the wet weather had set in; for while the former moved the whole distance along a paved high road, the latter had to proceed entirely by cross roads, which may more properly be designated common field-roads. It is to this particular point that both Grouchy and Gérard refer in justification of the late arrival of the infantry at Gembloux. Nevertheless, Grouchy detached considerably to his right, with his cavalry, misled by the same idea which had prevailed with Napoleon, that Blücher had retreated upon the Meuse; and the very circumstance of his dragoons having reached Perwès on the night of the 17th, proves that had he organized a more extended, more combined, and more energetic reconnaissance, with the forty-five squadrons of cavalry which had been placed under his orders, he might have connected his operations on the right of the Dyle with those of Napoleon on the left of that river, by occupying the line of Nil St. Vincent, Corbaix, Mont St. Guibert, and the bridge of Moustier. The

only check he would have experienced would have been at the Prussian post of Mont St. Guibert, which, however, in the case of an active reconnaissance, as above, might have been attacked by a strong detachment in front, and turned by Corbaix on its left. To show the connection which this disposition would have secured with Napoleon's movements, it is only necessary to state, that the 3rd cavalry-division, under Lieut. General Domont, had been detached from the Emperor's column to reconnoitre the country between the Dyle and the high road to Brussels, and that the 4th regiment of chasseurs à cheval pushed as far as the bridge of Moustier, on which line its skirmishers exchanged a few carbine-shots with some Prussian dragoons, who did not, however, appear willing to engage further with them. It was by means of this reconnaissance that Napoleon ascertained the retreat, through Tilly and Gentinnes, of the principal Prussian column, consisting of Zieten's and Pirch's corps, although the line by which they retired was undiscovered by Grouchy, in whose immediate sphere of operations it was situated. 17th of June.

But if such good grounds exist for inferring that, on the 17th, an earlier and a clearer insight into the enemy's movements might have been obtained by the corps detached in pursuit of the Prussians, and that when obtained, it would have rendered the communication with the operations of

17th of June.

the main army, on the left of the Dyle, a matter, not only important in the highest degree, but also perfectly practicable; and if a failure in this respect be attributable to the absence of sufficient energy and vigour on the part of Grouchy, how much more forcibly does it not expose the extraordinary, the unaccountable, dilatoriness of Napoleon himself during the whole of the precious morning of the 17th! How striking a view it unfolds of what might have been accomplished, had the bivouac at Ligny been broken up a few hours earlier! Then, Wellington's army was still between Quatre-Bras and the narrow defile of Genappe, open to an attack in front by Ney, simultaneously with one in flank by the force collected at Marbais (a part of which might have been detached across the Genappe, towards the rear of the Anglo-allied army, by Villers la Ville and Bousseval, masked by the wood of Berme); and the rearmost corps of the Prussian army, (Thielemann's,) which was retreating through Gembloux, might have been attacked with effect, by the superior force of all arms under Grouchy.

As regards Grouchy's movements during the early part of the 18th, it is very remarkable, that although he had in his despatch, written at ten o'clock the previous night, communicated to Napoleon his surmises of an intended junction of a portion of Blücher's forces with those of Wellington, and his consequent intention of following

the Prussians in the direction of Wavre, "*afin qu'ils ne puissent pas gagner Bruxelles, et de les séparer de Wellington*," and although he must or ought to have been aware that Wavre was only twelve miles distant from Napoleon's main line of operations, whereas Gembloux was about fifteen miles distant from Wavre, he not only delayed his departure from Gembloux until between seven and eight o'clock in the morning, but manœuvred by his right; taking the more circuitous line, through Sart-à-Wallain, and rendering his operation still more dilatory by moving both Vandamme's and Gérard's corps along one and the same road. Had he not, from want of sufficient vigilance, continued ignorant of the fact, that the principal Prussian column, consisting of the 1st and 2nd corps, had retired upon Wavre, at so short a distance from his left as by the line of Tilly, Gentinnes, and Mont St. Guibert, there can be very little doubt that he would have marched upon the latter point, which the Prussians, aware of its importance, had occupied with a rear-guard; but even with the amount of information which he possessed, and with the inference justly impressed upon his mind, that a co-operation between Blücher and Wellington was projected, we are at a loss to account for his not having moved upon Mont St. Guibert, and manœuvred by his left. In his despatch, written at two o'clock in the morning, he mentioned

18th of June.

18th of June. to the Emperor his design of marching upon Corbaix or Wavre; a movement of which Napoleon, in his reply, expressed his approval; and if he had directed one of his infantry-corps along the line of Corbaix and La Baraque, and the other by that of Mont St. Guibert and Moustier, there can be no doubt that, even late as was the hour at which he started from Gembloux, he would, in a great measure, have fulfilled the expectations of his imperial master. In this case, he would naturally have so divided his cavalry, that one portion would have scoured the country along the front and right of the column marching by Corbaix and La Baraque, and the other portion would have been employed in a similar manner along the front and left of the column moving upon Mont St. Guibert and Moustier. Both at this point and at Ottigines, about eight hundred yards lower down the stream, there is a stone bridge across the Dyle. There is a direct road from Moustier to St. Lambert, scarcely five miles distant, and another to the field of Waterloo. The cavalry in advance of the left column could not have failed to discover the Prussian troops in march to join the left of Wellington; for they were then passing slowly, and with extreme difficulty, through the defiles of St. Lambert and Lasne. This discovery would have led to the right column being moved by its left, from La Baraque to Moustier, the cavalry attached to it

masking the movement as long as possible. The left column would then, in all probability, have followed its advanced cavalry to St. Lambert; and the right corps have either moved upon the same point as a reinforcement, or have diverged upon Lasne as a support, upon which the former might have fallen back, if compelled to effect its retreat towards Planchenoit. 18th of June.

In this manner might Grouchy have so far realized the anxious expectation of Napoleon as to have fallen upon Bülow *flagrante delicto*, and have materially procrastinated the co-operation of Blücher with Wellington on the 18th of June; a co-operation which a contrary proceeding, originating in fatal tardiness of movement, and exhibiting useless manœuvring in a false direction, could not fail to render easy in execution, and successful in result. But beyond such procrastination of the meditated junction of Blücher's and Wellington's forces, Grouchy could have effected nothing. The junction itself could not have been prevented. The tendency of Grouchy's movements had been too narrowly watched; the country between the Dyle and the Charleroi road to Brussels had been too vigilantly explored, and the movements, in succession, of the different Prussian corps had been too nicely calculated and determined, to admit of the possibility of a failure, as regarded the arrival of a considerable portion of the Prussian forces on

18th of June. the left of the Anglo-allied army. Blücher had made so admirable a disposition of his four corps d'armée, that two of them could at any time have combined, and therefore have presented a superior force to Grouchy, at any point between Wavre and Planchenoit, whilst the remainder of the army might have continued its march to the field of Waterloo. Had Grouchy moved by St. Guibert and Moustier upon St. Lambert, Thielemann's corps would then have been on the march towards Couture, according to his original instructions; and, finding Bülow engaged with the enemy, would have joined him. Grouchy might then have contrived to hold both these corps at bay, and thus have reduced the co-operating Prussian force at Waterloo to the two corps under Zieten and Pirch, besides considerably retarding that co-operation, since without having experienced the effects of any such interruption to the progress of the other corps, as we have here supposed, those two Generals did not reach the field of battle until seven o'clock in the evening of the 18th. Such is the extent of the advantage which, under the circumstances, Grouchy would have gained by a march from Gembloux upon St. Lambert; a most important one, no doubt, as time for pushing the struggle with Wellington, with the whole force at his immediate disposal, before the arrival of the Prussians, was of the most vital consequence to

Napoleon; and this advantage Grouchy entirely lost by his march upon Wavre—a march which enabled Blücher to appear with three, out of his four, corps d'armée, on the great and decisive field of action; and that in sufficient time to render the victory as complete as could reasonably be desired. 18th of June.

No exertions, however, on the part of Grouchy, after he broke up from Gembloux on the morning of the 18th, could have effectually frustrated the junction of Wellington and Blücher. Two great errors, for which that Marshal was not accountable, reduced the contemplated junction from a measure of calculation to one of certainty. The first and principal of these has already been adverted to at some length, and cannot be too closely kept in view—the fatal neglect of a vigorous pursuit of the defeated Prussians, on the night of the 16th and morning of the 17th, by a detached corps; combined with the extraordinary delay in the attack upon Wellington, at Quatre-Bras, on the latter day. The second error arose from the want of a strong reconnaissance and vigilant look-out on the right of the main French army, on the morning of the 18th, followed up by the occupation of the defiles of the Lasne.

It was nearly four o'clock when Vandamme's corps arrived in front of the position which Thielemann was in the act of quitting, with a

18th of June. view to follow and support the remaining three Prussian corps that were at that moment on the march towards the field of Waterloo; and, with a fire that was opened from the French batteries, commenced the battle of Wavre, which will be described in its proper place in a subsequent chapter.

CHAPTER IX.

The French and Anglo-allied armies break up their bivouacs early on the morning of the 18th of June, in front of Waterloo—Preparations for battle—The field—Wellington's position—Distribution of the Anglo-allied army—Front line; with the advanced posts of Smohain, Ter la Haye, La Haye Sainte, and Hougomont—Second line—Reserves—Detached forces, in observation, near Hal, and at Tubize; the former under Prince Frederick of Orange, the latter under Sir Charles Colville—Braine-la-leud and Vieux Foriez occupied—Distribution of the Anglo-allied artillery—General view of the disposition of Wellington's forces—Napoleon's position—Distribution of the French army—Front line—Second line—Reserves—General view of the disposition of Napoleon's forces—Remarks on the Emperor's delay in commencing the battle—Strength of the Anglo-allied army in the field—Strength of the French army—The French columns moving into position—Intense interest excited in both armies when drawn up in presence of each other, and on the point of commencing the battle.

17th of June.

It rained incessantly during the night of the 17th; occasionally in torrents; whilst loud and frequent peals of thunder fell ominously on the ear of the toil-worn soldier, startling him from the fitful slumber, which was all the rest the chill and comfortless bivouac on the field of Waterloo could afford him in that tempestuous night.

Scarcely had the morning dawned when the numerous groups, stretched around the smouldering remains of the bivouac-fires, or couched in the hollows, or lying under such slender cover as the few trees and brushwood within range of the posi-

18th of June. tions of their respective regiments afforded, were seen gradually in motion; and as the eye of an observer wandered along the space which lay between the main bodies of the hostile armies—a space varying in no greater width than from 1000 to 1500 yards—the officers in command of the several picquets might be seen, on either side, withdrawing their vedettes and sentries from the very limited and almost conversational distance that had separated them from their opponents during the night, concentrating their detachments, and establishing their main posts more within the immediate range of the respective positions occupied by the grand armies.

As the morning advanced, the dense vapoury masses which had so long rolled slowly and heavily over the plain, gradually began, as if relieved by the constant discharge of their contents, to soar into a higher region, where, during the whole day, with little or but imperceptible motion, they hung spread out into a broad, expansive vault, through which the rays of the sun were unable fully to penetrate, until just at the moment of its sinking from the scene of strife, when it shed the full blaze of its setting splendour upon the victorious advance of the Anglo-allied army. The drying and cleaning of fire-arms soon became general, and the continuous discharge of muskets, at rapid and irregular intervals, fell upon the ear like the rattle of a brisk and widely extended skirmish. All at

once, the scene became more animated and exciting. Drums, bugles, and trumpets were heard over the whole field, sounding the assembly; and never was the call to arms, in either army, responded to with greater zeal, alacrity, and cheerfulness. While the regimental inspections, tellings-off, and preparatory arrangements of detail were proceeding, staff officers were seen galloping in various directions, and shortly afterwards, the different brigades, which, by their bivouacs had but faintly and irregularly traced the line of battle taken up by each army, were moved and distributed in the precise order prescribed by the illustrious chiefs who had on that day, and for the first and only time, met to measure swords. 18th of June.

The field of Waterloo is intersected by two high roads *(chaussées)* conspicuous by their great width and uniformity, as also by the pavement which runs along the centre of each. These two roads, the eastern one leading from Charleroi and Genappe, and the western from Nivelles, form a junction at the village of Mont St. Jean,* whence their continuance, in one main road, is directed upon the capital of Belgium. In front of the above junction, and offering, as it were, a natural military position for the defence of this approach to

* This village does not lie within the extent of ground represented in the plan which accompanies this work—the farm only of Mont St. Jean is seen close upon the north boundary—but its situation is at once made known by the direction of the above two roads.

18th of June. Brussels, a gently elevated ridge of ground is intersected, at right angles, by the Charleroi road, about 250 yards north of the farm called La Haye Sainte, and follows a westerly direction until about midway between the two high roads, whence it takes a south-westerly course, and terminates abruptly at its point of intersection with the Nivelles road, about 450 yards north of Hougomont, a country-seat, with farm, offices, gardens, orchards, and wood. On the east side, the ridge extends itself perpendicularly from the Charleroi road until it reaches a point, distant about 700 yards, where, elevating itself into a mound or knoll, it overlooks the hamlet of Papelotte, and thence, taking a north-easterly course, expands into an open plateau. This ridge constituted the position of the first line of the Duke of Wellington's army, which line is more distinctly defined by a road, entering on the east side, from Wavre, by Ohain, and winding along the summit of the ridge until it joins the Charleroi high road just above La Haye Sainte, from which point of junction a cross road proceeds along the remaining portion of the ridge, and thus connects the two high roads with each other.

The undulations of the ground in rear of this position were admirably adapted to the disposition of the second line and reserves, presenting a gently inclined reverse slope along nearly the whole extent of the ridge, with fine open and con-

venient stations for cavalry, perfectly concealed from the enemy's observation. The right of the main position is bounded by a valley, which has its source very considerably in rear of the centre of the French position, by which it is intersected, and thence, sweeping round the southern and western inclosures of Hougomont, proceeds in the direction of Merbe-braine. Into this valley a ravine directs its course in rear of, and parallel with, the principal portion of the right wing of the Anglo-allied position, at a distance from the latter varying from 200 to 250 yards; and between this ravine, which is intersected by the Nivelles road, and Merbe-braine, rises a sort of plateau, upon which was posted a portion of the 2nd corps, commanded by Lieut. General Lord Hill, destined to act, as circumstances might require, either in reserve to the first line, or *en potence* to it in repelling any attack upon that flank of the Anglo-allied army. 18th of June.

Upon the extreme left of the first or main line was stationed Vivian's light cavalry-brigade, comprising the 10th and 18th hussars, and the 1st hussars of the King's German legion. The two former regiments were in line, in rear of the Wavre road, and withdrawn a little from the crest of the ridge: the right of the 10th resting upon a lane, which, leading up from Smohain, crossing over the position, and descending along its reverse slope, proceeds in the direction of the village of Verd-cocou. The 1st hussars of the King's Ger-

18th of June.

man legion were also in line, and formed in reserve. The left of the brigade was completely *en l'air*, upon high, open, and flat ground; the main ridge widening considerably in that direction, as previously explained. A picquet, consisting of a squadron of the 10th hussars, (under Captain Taylor,*) occupied the village of Smohain, down in the valley which, having its source a little to the westward of La Haye Sainte, takes an easterly and therefore parallel course with that part of the ridge which formed the left wing of the British position. The advanced post of this picquet was on the further side of the village, and its vedettes formed a chain on the rising ground beyond, within half-carbine-shot of some French cavalry, standing dismounted in close columns. A party was detached from the picquet as a patrole on the road to Ohain.

The village of Smohain, as also the farms of Ter la Haye and Papelotte, with adjacent houses and inclosures, were occupied by a portion of the 2nd brigade of Perponcher's division of the troops of the Netherlands. The regiment of Orange-Nassau, consisting of two battalions, held Smohain and Ter la Haye; while the farm of Papelotte was occupied by the light company of the 3rd battalion of the 2nd regiment of Nassau, which, together with the 2nd battalion of this regiment,

* Now Colonel Thomas W. Taylor, C.B.

and 4 guns of Captain Byleveld's Dutch-Belgian battery of foot-artillery, were posted upon the exterior slope, immediately under the brow of the main ridge, and a little to the westward of the lane leading directly up the slope from the farm of Papelotte. 18th of June.

The advanced posts of these troops were at the foot, and their line of sentries extended along the brow, of the opposite slope of the valley; this line receded towards the western limit of the hamlet of Papelotte, where it joined the general line of picquets along the bottom of the exterior slope of the position of the Anglo-allied left wing.

On the right of Vivian's brigade, and having its own right resting upon a narrow lane, forming a slight hollow-way, lined with hedges, stood Vandeleur's brigade of light cavalry, consisting of the 11th, 12th, and 16th British light dragoons, in columns of squadrons, by regiments, left in front. The lane on which its right rested, descending the interior slope of the position, joined the other lane which led from Vivian's right to Verd-cocou.

The extreme left of the infantry of the main line of the position was formed by the 5th Hanoverian brigade, under Colonel von Vincke, belonging to Picton's division. It was formed in columns of battalions, those of Hameln and Hildesheim (under Majors von Strube and von Rheden) in first, and those of Peine and Gifhorn (under Major Count Ludolph von Westphalen, and Major

18th of June. von Hammerstein) in second, line; and was posted somewhat under the crest of the ridge, upon the reverse slope, and in rear of the junction of a lane leading up from Papelotte, with the Wavre road.

On the immediate right of Vincke's brigade, and having its own right upon the knoll which presents the highest and most commanding point along the position of the left wing of the Anglo-allied army, the 4th Hanoverian brigade, under Colonel Best, was drawn up. It formed part of the 6th division, and was composed of the land-wehr-battalions of Lüneburg, Verden, and Osterode, which were deployed in front line, and of Münden, which was in reserve. A battery of Hanoverian foot-artillery, under Captain von Rettberg, was attached to this brigade, and, from the peculiarly favourable circumstances of the ground, which formed a sort of natural field-work, was most advantageously placed.

Upon the exterior slope of that portion of the ridge which lies between the before mentioned knoll and the Genappe high road, Bylandt's brigade of Perponcher's division of the troops of the Netherlands was deployed in front line. It consisted of the 27th battalion of Dutch light infantry, the 7th battalion of the Belgian line, and of the 5th, 7th, and 8th battalions of Dutch militia. Of the above, the 5th battalion of Dutch militia was posted in reserve, along with the remaining 4 guns of Captain Byleveld's battery of

foot-artillery attached to this brigade, in rear of the straggling hedge which lines the Wavre road, between the knoll and the Charleroi high road. 18th of June.

Upon the interior slope of the ridge, and at a distance of about 200 yards from the Wavre road, was posted the 9th brigade of British infantry, under Major General Sir Denis Pack, in a line of battalion-columns, at deploying intervals. It consisted of the 3rd battalion 1st royal regiment, the 1st battalion 42nd royal Highlanders, 2nd battalion 44th regiment, and of the 92nd Highlanders. The left regiment, the 44th, was stationed on the knoll, in rear of the right of Best's Hanoverian brigade; and on the right of the 44th stood, in succession, the 92nd, 42nd, and 1st royals. Upon the right, but more in advance, of Pack's brigade, and at a short distance in rear of the hedge along the Wavre road, stood the 8th brigade of British infantry, under Major General Sir James Kempt, also in line of battalion-columns, at deploying intervals, and comprising the 28th regiment, the 32nd regiment, the 1st battalion 79th Highlanders, and the 1st battalion 95th rifles. The right of the 32nd regiment rested upon a high bank of the Charleroi road; on its left stood the 79th Highlanders, and the 28th formed the left regiment of the brigade. In the immediate front of the right of the brigade, and at a distance from the Wavre road of about 120 yards, there was a knoll, having

18th of June. on its right a large sandpit, adjoining the Charleroi road, and partially facing the small garden in rear of La Haye Sainte. On the Allied side of the knoll was a single hedge, extending about 150 yards from the Charleroi road in a direction parallel to the Wavre road. In the sandpit were posted two companies of the 1st battalion 95th British rifles; the knoll and hedge were occupied by another company of the same regiment. These advanced companies had placed an *abatis* across the high road, near that part of it which is joined by the hedge-row. The remaining companies lined a portion of the Wavre road, commencing from the point of its intersection with the Charleroi road.

These two brigades, namely, the 8th and 9th British, together with the 5th Hanoverian brigade, constituted the 5th division, under Lieut. General Sir Thomas Picton.

Along the continuation of the ridge on the right of the great Charleroi road, the 3rd division, commanded by Lieut. General Count Alten, was disposed in the following order:—

The 2nd brigade of the King's German legion, commanded by Colonel von Ompteda,* which formed the left of the division, consisted of the 1st and 2nd light battalions, (under Lieut. Colonel

* Colonel Christian von Ompteda was killed in this battle.

von dem Bussche,* and Major Baring,†) and of the 5th and 8th line-battalions of the King's German legion, (under Lieut. Colonels von Linsingen‡ and von Schröder.§) The 1st light battalion was formed in column of companies at quarter distance, left in front. It stood a little in rear of the cross-road which unites the great Nivelles road with that of Charleroi, on which last its left flank rested. To the right of this column stood the 5th line-battalion, formed in column at quarter distance upon its two centre companies. In rear of these two columns, and fronting the deploying interval between them, stood the 8th line-battalion, in second line, in column of companies, at quarter distance, on its two centre companies. The 2nd light battalion, under the command of Major Baring, occupied the farm of La Haye Sainte. 18th of June.

The buildings of this farm are so disposed as to form three sides of a square, the north side comprising the farm-house itself, with a portion of the stabling, the west side the remainder of the stables and cow-houses, and the south side principally a large barn: a brick wall, extending along the great

* Now Lieut. General Lewis von dem Bussche, G.C.H., C.B. in the Hanoverian service.

† Now Major General Baron Baring, K.C.H., C.B., in the Hanoverian service.

‡ Now Lieut. General William von Linsingen, K.C.H., C.B., h.p. Hanoverian service.

§ Lieut. Colonel John Christian von Schröder was mortally wounded in this battle.

18th of June. road, unites the north and south buildings, and thus forms the fourth boundary of the large quadrangular farm-yard. On the south, or French, side of the farm, and down in the valley, which here separates the Allied and French positions, lies an orchard of about 240 yards long and 80 wide, having for its eastern boundary the great road, in direct prolongation of the wall which encloses the farm-yard on that side. This orchard is inclosed within a hedge-row, as is also a kitchen-garden, on the north side of the farm, excepting the boundary of the latter, along the road-side, which is a continuation of the eastern wall. A large gate and a door-way, the former almost facing the east end of the barn, and the latter quite close to the east end of the dwelling-house, lead from the yard into the great road; another gate, at the south end of the stabling which forms the western side, as also a large door from the west end of the great barn, lead both into a small, narrow portion of the orchard, whence there is an outlet into the open fields on the right. From the front-door of the dwelling-house, which faces the farm-yard, there is a passage to the back or north side of the house, whence a door opens into the kitchen-garden.

Since day-break, the little garrison, amounting to scarcely 400 men, had been busily engaged in strengthening their post to the fullest extent of the means within their reach, which, however, were

extremely limited. Among the difficulties which they had to overcome, it may be remarked that, on the preceding evening, immediately after taking possession of the farm, the soldiers had broken up the great barn-door, on the west side, for firewood; and that, about the same period, the carpenters of the regiment were detached to Hougomont, in compliance with an order received to that effect. Unfortunately, also, the mule, laden with the regimental trenching-tools, had been lost the day before, so that not even a hatchet was forthcoming. Loop-holes were pierced through the walls, and a barricade was thrown across the high road, in prolongation of the south wall. The battalion was composed of six companies, of which Major Baring posted three in the orchard, two in the buildings, and one in the garden. 18th of June.

On the right of Ompteda's brigade stood the 1st Hanoverian brigade, under Major General Count Kielmansegge, consisting of the field-battalions of Bremen, Verden, Duke of York, Grubenhagen, and Lüneburg. The last mentioned battalion was formed in column, at quarter distance, on its two centre companies; the head of the column in line with, and at a deploying interval from, that of the right column of Ompteda's brigade. Next, on the right, at the proper interval for deployment, stood the two battalions Verden and Bremen, in contiguous columns of companies, at quarter distance; the former right in front, the latter left in front.

18th of June. The two battalions York and Grubenhagen were formed in second line, in rear of the centre of the interval between the battalions Lüneburg and Verden, in contiguous columns of companies, at quarter distance, York right, and Grubenhagen left, in front.

On the right of Kielmansegge's Hanoverian brigade, was posted the 5th British brigade, commanded by Major General Sir Colin Halkett, and comprising the 2nd battalion 30th, the 1st battalion 33rd, 2nd battalion 69th, and 2nd battalion 73rd British regiments. Its position was more forward than that of the other portion of Alten's division, with which its front was in an oblique direction, its right shoulders having been brought forward so as to preserve the parallelism between the general line and the crest of the main ridge. The second battalions 73rd and 30th regiments formed contiguous columns of companies, at quarter distance, the former right, the latter left, in front, and at a deploying interval for two battalions from the head of the column formed by the Bremen battalion. The other two battalions of this brigade, the first battalion 33rd and 2nd battalion 69th regiments, were formed in contiguous columns of companies, at quarter distance, in second line, and in right rear of the 73rd and 30th regiments; the 33rd right, and the 69th left, in front.

In rear of the centre of the interval between the right of Kielmansegge's, and the left of

Halkett's brigade, was posted, in second line, the 1st battalion of the 1st regiment of Nassau, forming part of the Nassau brigade, commanded by Major General von Kruse. The battalion was in column on its centre companies. The remainder of this brigade, consisting of the 2nd and 3rd battalions of the same regiment, was formed in contiguous columns, in a third line, as a reserve. 18th of June.

On the right of Halkett's brigade, the 1st British division, commanded by Major General Cooke, was posted. It consisted of the 1st and 2nd brigades of guards, and was disposed in the following manner:—The 1st brigade, commanded by Major General Maitland, and comprising the 2nd and 3rd battalions of the 1st regiment of foot guards, formed the left brigade of the division. The 3rd battalion stood in column of companies, at quarter distance, on the crest of the ridge; and between it and the head of the right column of Halkett's brigade, there was a deploying interval for one battalion. The 2nd battalion was placed in right rear of the 3rd, also in column of companies, at quarter distance: it was on the reverse slope, and immediately under the crest of the ridge.

The 2nd brigade, comprising the 2nd battalion of the 2nd or Coldstream regiment, and the 3rd battalion of the 3rd regiment of foot guards, and commanded by Major General Sir John Byng, was posted on the crest of the ridge, between the 1st brigade and the Nivelles road. The 2nd battalion

18th of June. 3rd foot guards was on the left, the 2nd battalion of the Coldstream guards on the right, and more in advance on the brow of the hill, and the disposition was such, that the four battalions of the division were placed *en échiquier*. The buildings of Hougomont, its gardens and orchards, were completely overlooked from the commanding ground occupied by the 2nd brigade, which formed the reserve to the troops therein posted, consisting (including those in the wood) of the four light companies of the division, the 1st battalion of the 2nd regiment of Nassau, a company of Hanoverian field-riflemen, and a detachment of a hundred men from the field-battalion Lüneburg, of Kielmansegge's brigade.

The principal dwelling-house or château of Hougomont was a substantial brick building, of a square form. Adjoining its north-east angle was the farmer's house, the east end of which abutted on the great garden; and in the angle between this house and the château was a narrow tower, of the same height as the latter, to which its interior served as a staircase. At the south-east corner of, and communicating with, the château, stood a very neat little chapel. On the north, or British side of the château, was a spacious farm-yard, bounded on the west by a large barn, and a shed, and on the east by cow-houses and stabling adjoining the garden. There was a continuation of the stabling along the north side, and a gateway; and near the

centre of the yard there was a draw-well of which the superstructure formed a dove-cot. On the south, or French side of the château, and inclosing the latter, was the court-yard, of which a barn on the west, the gardener's house, some stables, and other offices, on the south, and the garden-wall on the east, formed the boundaries. There was a communication between the court and the farm-yard, by means of a doorway in the small portion of wall connecting the château with the great barn, and through the whole length of the latter building there was also a carriage-way leading from the one court into the other. A gateway, passing through a portion of the gardener's house, led out from the court-yard to the south or French side, and from this gate a narrow road conducted across the open space between the buildings and the wood, through which it took its course in the same direction until it gained the fields beyond the inclosures. There was also a pathway from this road, commencing at the corner of the little garden, and traversing the wood in the direction of the south-east angle of the general boundary of the inclosures, whence it continued towards La Belle Alliance. The approach to Hougomont from the Nivelles road was lined, nearly as far as the château, by fine tall elms; it conducted to the gate of the farm-yard facing the British line, and, sweeping along the west side, it led also to the south gate of the court-yard. On the east side of

18th of June.

18th of June. the buildings was a large garden, laid out with all the formality which characterizes the Flemish style. It was inclosed on the south and east sides by a high brick wall, and on the north side, facing the British line, by a hedge. Adjoining the east side of the garden, but considerably wider and longer than the latter, was the large orchard, and along the north side was the smaller orchard—the latter bounded by a hedge and hollow-way, and the former inclosed within high and compact hedges, partially lined by a ditch on the inner side. A prolongation of the southern hedge of the great orchard formed the boundary of the wood facing the south garden-wall, and in the narrow space between these two boundaries was a row of apple-trees, which, together with the hedge, served to conceal, in a great measure, the garden-wall from the view of an enemy approaching through the wood. There was a small garden in front of the gardener's house, formed by the continuation of the south garden-wall until it met another wall issuing perpendicularly from the south gateway leading out of the court-yard. There were two inclosures on the west side, of which one served as a kitchen-garden. The wood extended in length, southward, about 350 yards, and its greatest width was about 280 yards. It was bounded on the west by another orchard, and on the east by two large inclosures, of which the one nearest the great orchard was a grass-field, fenced

with hedges, and lined by a ditch on the inner side. 18th of June.

Although the site of the buildings of Hougomont was but slightly elevated above the valley, which, as already remarked, winds along the south and west inclosures, there was a gradual but uninterrupted ascent of the ground from thence as far as the eastern portion of the fence which divides the two inclosures, beyond the great orchard, where it attained a height not much inferior to that of either the French or Allied front lines, between which it was centrically situated. On the south or French side of that hedge, the ground inclined at first gently, and then rapidly, into the valley; but on the west, throughout the extent of the wood, and on the north or Allied side, across the great orchard, the descent was everywhere very gradual.*

Such was Hougomont—a decidedly important point in the field of battle, from its prominent position in the immediate front of the right of the British line, and rendered ever memorable by the truly heroic and successful stand maintained throughout the day by the troops allotted for its defence.†

* I have been induced to enter so fully into detail in this description of Hougomont in order to convey a correct notion of its great value and importance, when considered in relation to the Anglo-allied and French positions, as a military post, to whichever army might succeed in maintaining it, and thus to account for the powerful and repeated efforts made by the French to secure so valuable a vantage-ground.

† There is not, perhaps, at the present day, any single feature of the field

18th of June.

From the first moment of the occupation of this post, measures were concerted and adopted for strengthening the means of defence which it presented. During the night, the garden-walls were pierced with numerous loop-holes; and, in order to enable the men to fire down from the tops of the

of Waterloo so well calculated to excite the interest of visitors as Hougomont, which still continues what it was reduced to on the day of battle—a heap of ruins. The barn in the court-yard has, indeed, been again roofed, and the gardener's house is now occupied by the farmer; but the château itself, and the buildings surrounding the old farm-yard, present to the eye nothing more than crumbling walls, scattered stones, bricks, and rubbish. A portion of the tower, with its winding staircase, still exists. But the attention of the visitor is most naturally and strongly arrested by the chapel, which, though it immediately adjoined the burning château, survives the wreck around it, and inclines him to listen without a sneer to the guide, when, pointing to the scorched feet of the wooden figure of the Saviour of mankind, in the interior, over the entrance, he ascribes the preservation of the sanctuary to the miraculous interposition of Providence. A sanctuary indeed it proved to such of the wounded as took refuge within its walls, who were thus spared from the agonizing death that befel their suffering comrades in the other buildings, which became a prey to the devouring flames, and from which it was impossible, under the circumstances of the moment, to extricate but a small proportion. In the great garden it is not easy to trace its original design: grass, weeds, and wild flowers, now luxuriate where neat and gay parterres, redolent with nature's sweet perfumes, were wont to tempt the seigneur of the château to the enjoyment of a contemplative lounge within the walls of this retired spot; while the wilderness at the east end of the garden is more appropriately designated by that term than when it was intersected by its straight and formal, though smooth and neatly trimmed, walks. The garden-walls, too, on which, from out-spread branches once hung the clustering fruit, now bear nothing but tokens of the deadly strife of which they were the scene. The identical loop-holes, with the innumerable marks of shot indented around them, are still permitted to remain as they were left by the brave defenders of the place. The wood, however, has altogether vanished, and the ground on which the beech and elm by their countless shot-holes told a fearful tale, now yields its surface to the harrow and the plough. This constitutes the only material deviation; the orchards, and remaining inclosures, continue unaltered, and retain the self-same aspect.

walls upon their assailants, platforms, constructed out of such materials as the place afforded, were raised wherever the depth of the wall on the inner side rendered such a measure desirable. In many places, however, and especially on the eastern side, the ground formed embankments against the wall, sufficiently elevated to obviate the necessity of any additional aid for such purpose. The outer gates were closed up, with the exception of the one from the farm-yard, which faced the Anglo-allied position, and which was left open in order to facilitate the communication with the latter. The different flanking fires which were offered by the relative situations of the garden-walls, and the fences of the orchards, wood, and other inclosures, imparted to the post a strength, of which, in the course of the action, due advantage was taken. In short, every precaution was adopted which the means at hand suggested for contributing to the security of the place; and the preparations that were in progress indicated, on the part of the troops stationed in this quarter, an intention to give the enemy a warm reception, and a resolution to maintain a vigorous defence. 18th of June.

When, on the previous evening, the light companies of the division were thrown into Hougomont, it was so arranged that those of the 2nd brigade, under the command of Lieut. Colonel Macdonell, should occupy the buildings and the

18th of June. gardens, and that those of the 1st brigade, under Lieut. Colonel Lord Saltoun, should hold the great orchard and the wood; in which latter the Hanoverians and Nassauers were principally stationed.

The abrupt termination of the ridge along which the Allied front line was posted, at its point of junction with the Nivelles road, was in the direct rear of the buildings of Hougomont. On the other side of the road, this termination presented a sudden and bold, though short, slope down into the long valley which, after sweeping by Hougomont, proceeds in the direction of Merbe-braine. A portion of the slope, including the summit, was covered with brushwood, and its base was bounded by a horse-path, partially lined with a stunted hedge, forming, altogether, excellent cover for light infantry.* On the other side of the valley the ground ascends, at first abruptly, and then gradually, to the summit of that portion of the main ridge upon which the left of the French army rested; and from the point of junction of the avenue conducting to Hougomont with the great Nivelles road, a narrow road leads directly up the opposite slope, and stretches across the ridge or

* This spot of ground, bounded by the Nivelles road, the horse-path, and, on the north, by a hollow-way, was once entirely covered with brushwood, which has been gradually cleared away by poor people, to whom small portions were allotted for cultivation, so that at the present day no vestige of the brushwood remains.

plateau in the direction of Braine-la-leud. Along a portion of this road, principally consisting of a hollow-way, were posted in advance, some light troops of the Anglo-allied army. They formed a part of the 4th brigade of the 4th division, (under Colonel Mitchell,*) attached to the 2nd corps, commanded by Lieut. General Lord Hill. The brigade consisted of the 3rd battalion of the 14th British regiment, (under Lieut. Colonel Tidy,†) of the 23rd fusileers, (under Colonel Sir Henry Ellis,‡) and of the 51st British light infantry, (under Lieut. Colonel Rice,§) which troops were disposed in the following manner. Along that portion of the Hougomont avenue which is nearest to the Nivelles road was extended the light company of the 23rd regiment. On its right was an *abatis*, which had been thrown across the great road, and close upon the right of this artificial obstacle, a company of the 51st regiment was posted. Four more companies of this regiment, and the light company of the 14th, were extended along the hollow-way alluded to as stretching across the ridge, on the extreme left of the French position. The remainder of the 51st stood in column of support, about two hundred yards in rear of the hollow-way. The 23rd regiment was stationed on

18th of June.

* Colonel Hugh Henry Mitchell, C.B., died on the 20th of April, 1817.
† Colonel Francis Skelly Tidy, C.B., died on the 9th of October, 1835.
‡ Colonel Sir Henry Walton Ellis, K.C.B., was killed in this battle.
§ Colonel Samuel Rice, C.B., K.H., died on the 7th March, 1840.

18th of June.

the left of the Nivelles road, on the reverse slope, and immediately under the crest of the main ridge, in rear of the 2nd brigade of guards. The 14th regiment was posted in column on the southern descent from the plateau, on which was assembled the 2nd British division, and from the view which it possessed of the ground occupied by the 51st, it was well placed as a reserve to the light infantry. In a ravine, descending from the immediate right of the skirmishers of the brigade down into the valley, was posted a squadron of the 15th British hussars, (under Captain Wodehouse,*) from which a picquet was detached to the right of the *abatis*, as also an intermediate one for keeping up the communication, and some vedettes were thrown out to the right, having in their front a continuation of the ravine, possessing a more marked and distinct character.†

The troops posted upon the plateau already described as situated on the west of the Nivelles road, and in front of the village of Merbe-braine, and which, together with Colonel Mitchel's brigade, constituted the extreme right of the Anglo-

* Now Colonel Philip Wodehouse.

† It will scarcely escape the eye of an accurate observer of the features of ground, that this ravine, or rather passage, throughout its course from over the opposite ridge, down into the valley, and through the brushwood, and across the plateau eastward of Merbe-braine, inclining towards the Nivelles road, betrays an artificial origin: and he will thus readily comprehend its being the track of the old road to Nivelles, which existed previously to the construction of the present excellent *chaussée*.

allied army, under the command of Lord Hill, were available either as a reserve to the main line of battle, or as a defence against any hostile attempt upon the right flank. They consisted of the main body of the 2nd infantry-division, commanded by Lieut. General Sir Henry Clinton. This was composed of the 3rd British light brigade, under Major General Sir Frederick Adam,* of the 1st brigade of the King's German legion, under Colonel du Plat,† and of the 3rd Hanoverian brigade, under Colonel Halkett.‡ Adam's brigade, consisting of the 52nd regiment, (under Colonel Sir John Colborne,§) of the 71st regiment, (under Colonel Reynell,‖) of the 2nd battalion of the 95th regiment, (under Lieut. Colonel Norcott,¶) and two companies of the 3rd battalion of the latter corps, (under Lieut. Colonel Ross,**) was, previously to the commencement of the battle, posted between the village of Merbe-braine and the Nivelles road, near where the latter is intersected by the cross-road leading to Braine-la-leud; but as soon as the first attack was made upon

18th of June.

* Now Lieut. General the Right Hon. Sir Frederick Adam, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

† Colonel Charles du Plat was mortally wounded in this battle.

‡ Now Lieut. General Hugh Halkett, C.B., in the Hanoverian service.

§ Now Lieut. General Lord Seaton, G.C.B. G.C.H.

‖ Now Lieut. General Sir Thomas Reynell, Bart. K.C.B.

¶ Major General Sir Amos Godsill Norcott, C.B., K.C.H., died on the 8th of January, 1838.

** Major General Sir John Ross, K.C.B., died on the 21st of April, 1835.

18th of June. Hougomont, (with which the battle opened,) it was advanced beyond this cross-road, and stood, in battalion-columns of companies, at quarter distance, on the plateau, whence it overlooked the Nivelles road, and had a full view of that portion of the main front line to which the troops of Clinton's division formed a reserve. Du Plat's brigade of the King's German legion, consisting of the 1st line-battalion (under Major Von Robertson*), of the 2nd (under Major Müller†), of the 3rd (under Lieut Colonel von Wissell‡), and of the 4th (under Major Reh§), stood in open column, near the foot of the slope descending towards the Nivelles road. Halkett's brigade, consisting of the landwehr-battalions Bremorvörde (under Lieut. Colonel von der Schulenburg), Salzgitter (under Major von Hammerstein), Osnabrück (under Major Count Münster), and Quackenbrück (under Major von dem Bussche Hünefeld), was posted in contiguous close columns of battalions, on the north side of the plateau, near the village of Merbebraine.

The second general line of the Anglo-allied army consisted entirely of cavalry, British and

* Now Lieut. Colonel William von Robertson, C.B., K.C.H.

† Now Major General George Müller, C.B., K.C.H., in the Hanoverian service.

‡ Colonel Frederick von Wissell, C.B., K.C.H., in the Hanoverian service, died on the 16th of December, 1820.

§ Lieut. Colonel Frederick Reh, C.B., K.C.H., died on the 24th of July, 1829.

German. Posted partly on the reverse slope of the main ridge, and partly in the hollows in rear, it was entirely screened from the enemy's observation. The brigades were formed, for the most part, by regiments, in close columns of squadrons, at deploying intervals. 18th of June.

Commencing from the right, near to the Nivelles road, stood the 5th brigade, under Major General Sir Colquhoun Grant, consisting of the 7th and 15th hussars, and of the 13th light dragoons,* (under Colonel Doherty.†)

On the left of Grant's brigade was posted the 3rd brigade, under Major General Sir William Dörnberg, consisting of the 23rd light dragoons, and of the 1st and 2nd light dragoons of the King's German legion. The Cumberland Hanoverian hussars (under Lieut. Colonel von Hake) were attached to, and formed in rear of, this brigade. They properly belonged to Colonel von Estorff's Hanoverian cavalry-brigade, as did also the Prince Regent's hussars (under Lieut. Colonel Ferdinand Count Kielmansegge), and the Bremen and Verden hussars (under Colonel August von dem Bussche), which regiments were detached with the force at Hal.

* This regiment did not properly belong to Grant's brigade, but was taken from Colonel von Arentsschildt's brigade, to replace the 2nd hussars of the King's German legion, which was still upon the frontier, as explained at page 260.

† Colonel Patrick Doherty, C.B., K.C.H., retired from the service on the 8th December, 1818.

18th of June.

Still more to the left, and in rear of the right of Alten's division, stood the 3rd hussars of the King's German legion, under Colonel Sir Frederick von Arentsschildt.*

Immediately on the right of the Charleroi road, and in rear of Alten's division, the 1st or household brigade, under Major General Lord Edward Somerset, was drawn up. It comprised the 1st and 2nd life guards, the royal horse guards (blues), and the 1st dragoon guards.

On the left of the Charleroi road, and in rear of Picton's division, stood the 2nd brigade, under Major General Sir William Ponsonby; consisting of the 1st dragoons (royals), the 2nd dragoons (Scots Greys), and the 6th dragoons (Inniskillings).

The 4th and 6th brigades, under Major Generals Sir John Vandeleur and Sir Hussey Vivian, were posted upon the extreme left of the main line of the position, as previously explained.

The reserves consisted of the Dutch-Belgian cavalry-division, under Lieut. General Baron Collaert; of the Brunswick corps, comprising both cavalry and infantry, the command of which, since

* This officer was in command of the 7th cavalry brigade, consisting of the 13th light dragoons, and the 3rd hussars of the King's German legion; but the former having been removed to supply the place of the 2nd hussars of the King's German legion, in Grant's brigade, he had now only the 3rd hussars, which regiment, however, was of considerable strength. Major General Sir Frederick Levin August von Arentsschildt, K.C.B., K.C.H., of the Hanoverian service, died on the 10th of December, 1840.

the fall of the Duke, had devolved upon Colonel Olfermann, and of the 10th British brigade, under Major General Sir John Lambert. The latter formed part of the 6th division, commanded by Lieut. General the Hon. Sir Lowry Cole, and had only just reached the field, after having performed forced marches from Ghent. 18th of June.

Collaert's division was stationed in rear of the centre, and within the angle formed by the junction of the high roads leading from Charleroi and Nivelles. It comprised the 1st brigade, commanded by Major General Trip, and consisting of the 1st Dutch carabiniers, the 2nd Belgian carabiniers, and the 3rd Dutch carabiniers; the 2nd brigade, commanded by Major General Ghigny, and consisting of the 4th Dutch dragoons, and the 8th Belgian hussars; and the 3rd brigade, commanded by Major General van Merle, and consisting of the 5th Belgian light dragoons, and the 6th Dutch hussars.

The Brunswick corps was posted between the northern portion of the village of Merbe-braine and the Nivelles road, on which its left rested; and comprised the following troops:—a regiment of hussars, a squadron of lancers; the advanced-guard battalion (which was at this time detached to the right of Merbe-braine); a light infantry brigade, under Lieut. Colonel von Buttlar, consisting of the guard-battalion, and the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd light battalions; and an infantry brigade,

18th of June. under Lieut. Colonel von Specht, consisting of the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd line-battalions.*

Lambert's brigade was posted near the farm of Mont St. Jean, and consisted of the 4th regiment (under Lieut. Colonel Brooke†), of the 27th regiment (under Major Hare‡), and of the 40th regiment (under Major Heyland§).

In order to afford greater security to the right flank of the Anglo-allied army, and also to keep open the communication with the detached forces near Hal, and at Tubize, namely, the corps of Prince Frederick of Orange, and the 6th British and 6th Hanoverian brigades, under Lieut. General Sir Charles Colville, it was deemed essential to occupy the small town of Braine-la-leud, about three-quarters of a mile westward of Merbebraine; and whence a road leads to Tubize, which is distant between eight and nine miles.

With this view, the 3rd division of the Netherlands, commanded by Lieut. General Baron Chassé, was placed under the orders of General Lord Hill, a part of whose corps, as previously explained, formed the extreme right of the Anglo-allied po-

* In order to include these troops in the Plan representing the armies in position before the commencement of the battle, they have been placed somewhat more in advance, and as having taken up the ground previously occupied by Adam's brigade, which has been moved into the position it proceeded to take up as soon as the battle began.

† Lieut. Colonel Francis Brooke, C.B., retired from the service on the 3rd of August, 1820.

‡ Now Colonel John Hare, C.B., K.H.

§ Major Arthur Rowley Heyland was killed in this battle.

sition. The 1st brigade, under Colonel Ditmers, occupied the town itself. It consisted of the 35th battalion of Belgian light infantry, the 2nd battalion of the Dutch line, and of the 4th, 6th, 17th, and 19th battalions of Dutch militia. The 17th battalion, detached a little to the left, kept up the communication with Clinton's British division. The 2nd brigade, under Major General d'Aubremé, occupied a good position about half a mile in advance of Braine-la-leud, upon a height on which stood the farm of Vieux Foriez. 18th of June.

It was at a very early hour of the 18th that Lieut. Colonel Torrens, Deputy Quarter Master General, reached Braine-le-Comte, and delivered to Sir Charles Colville the order (see pages 279, 280) for his falling back upon Hal. That General immediately put in motion his two brigades. These consisted of the 6th British brigade, under Major General Johnstone, and the 6th Hanoverian brigade, under Major General Sir James Lyon, accompanied by Major Brome's British foot-battery. The remaining brigade, (the 4th British, under Colonel Mitchell,) as also the other foot-battery belonging to the 4th division (Captain von Rettberg's Hanoverian), were on the field of Waterloo. On reaching Tubize, Colville fell in with the advance of Prince Frederick's corps, and as that was the point of junction with the road leading by Braine-le-château and Braine-la-leud to the position in front of Waterloo, he halted there, and

18th of June. despatched Lieut. Colonel Woodford,* Assistant Quarter Master General to the division, to report his proceedings to the Duke. His Grace expressed himself perfectly satisfied, and desired Lieut. Colonel Woodford to remain upon the field of Waterloo, in order that he might be prepared to return to Sir Charles Colville with any instructions which circumstances might induce the Duke to transmit to him.†

The artillery of the Anglo-allied army, commanded by Colonel Sir George Wood, was distributed in the following manner:—On the extreme left was a British horse-battery‡ of 6 guns, under Lieut. Colonel Sir Robert Gardiner,‖ with Vivian's hussar-brigade. Upon the exterior slope of the main ridge, and above the hamlet of Papelotte, were 4 guns of Captain Byleveld's Dutch-Belgian

* Now Major General Sir John George Woodford, K.C.B., K.C.H.

† Lieut. Colonel Woodford was detained on the field during the whole of the battle, and did not rejoin the 4th division until the following morning. It is singular that, notwithstanding the tremendous and continuous cannonade, nothing was heard of the battle by these detached troops, although at so short a distance from the field. They remained on the open ground, with piled arms, during the whole day and night, without knowing anything of the momentous affair at Waterloo, until Sir Charles Colville received, through the medium of an officer of Belgian gens d'armerie, a letter from Colonel Felton Harvey,[1] of the Quarter Master General's Staff, announcing to him the glorious victory, and directing him to march immediately to Nivelles.

‡ For the sake of uniformity, and to prevent misconception, I have adopted, throughout this work, the terms "horse-battery" and "foot-battery," employed in all the continental armies, although in the British service the distinction is better known by the terms "troop" and "brigade."

§ Now Major General Sir Robert Gardiner, K.C.B., K.C.H.

[1] Colonel Sir Felton E. B. Hervey, Bart., C.B., died in 1819.

foot-battery, attached to Perponcher's division. The remaining 4 guns of this battery were on the crest of the main ridge, in rear of that division. On the highest point of the position of the left wing, and in front of the right of Best's Hanoverian brigade, was posted Captain von Rettberg's Hanoverian foot-battery of 6 guns. In front of Kempt's brigade stood Major Rogers's British foot-battery of 6 guns. Major Lloydd's British, and Captain Cleeves's King's German, foot-batteries, of 6 guns each, were with Alten's division. Major Kuhlmann's King's German horse-battery, and Captain Sandham's* British foot-battery, of 6 guns each, were attached to Cooke's division. All the above batteries were posted in front line; as was also Lieut. Colonel Sir Hew Ross's† British horse-battery, (from the reserve,) of 6 guns, which was posted on the height immediately in rear of La Haye Sainte, and near the intersection of the Wavre road with the Charleroi high road, in which latter 2 of its guns were stationed. Major Sympher's‡ King's German horse-battery, and Captain Bolton's§ British foot-battery, of 6 guns each, were attached to Clinton's division. The remaining horse-batteries were with the cavalry. They were (exclusive of Lieut. Colonel Sir Robert Gar- 18th of June.

* Now Major Charles Freeman Sandham, h.p. Royal Artillery.

† Now Major General Sir Hew Dalrymple Ross, K.C.B.

‡ Lieut. Colonel Augustus Sympher, C.B., K.H., of the Hanoverian artillery, died on the 11th of December, 1830.

§ Captain Samuel Bolton was killed in this battle.

18th of June. diner's already mentioned) Major Bull's* of 6 howitzers; Lieut. Colonel Webber Smith's,† of 6 guns; Major Whinyates's,‡ of 6 guns, and provided with rockets; Captain Mercer's,§ of 6 guns; and Major Ramsay's,‖ of 6 guns. Captain Petter's Dutch-Belgian horse-battery, of 8 guns, was attached to Collaert's cavalry-division. The Dutch-Belgian horse-battery under Captain Van der Smissen, and foot-battery under Captain Lux, of 8 guns each, were with Chassé's division, at Braine-la-leud. The Brunswick horse-battery, under Captain von Heinemann, and foot-battery, under Major Moll, of 8 guns each, were with the Brunswick corps. The British horse-battery under Major Beane,¶ and foot-battery under Captain Sinclair,** (belonging to the 6th division,) as also the Hanoverian foot-battery under Captain Braun,†† all three having 6 guns each, were in reserve near Mont St. Jean. The whole of the batteries were engaged in the front line, more or less, during the course of the battle.

This disposition of Wellington's forces, so com-

* Lieut. Colonel Robert Bull, C.B., K.H., died on the 17th of April, 1835.

† Now Major General James Webber Smith, C.B.

‡ Now Colonel Whinyates, C.B.

§ Now Lieut. Colonel Alexander Cavelie Mercer.

‖ Major William N. Ramsay was killed in this battle.

¶ Major George Beane was killed in this battle.

** Now Lieut. Colonel James Sinclair, *ret.* h.p. Royal Artillery.

†† Now Lieut. Colonel William Braun, K.H., of the Hanoverian artillery.

pletely in accordance with the general features of the ground which he had selected with consummate judgment as the field on which he was prepared to give battle to his imperial rival in the great art of war, was admirably calculated for either offensive or defensive measures. The opposite line of heights, which the enemy would naturally crown with the main line of his forces, was fully within the effectual range of cannon-shot; and no hostile movement could be made against any part of the position, that would remain undiscovered within the range of musketry. The formation of the ground in rear of the ridge, along the brow of which his front line was posted, was such as effectually to screen from the enemy's observation any movements of the supports and reserves, preparatory to either a contemplated attack, or to the assembling of the necessary means of resistance at any threatened point. In rear of the main front line the ground was practicable for the movements of all arms, the country was perfectly open, and the two high roads added still further to the facility of communication between the front and rear. The occupation of the posts of Hougomont and La Haye Sainte presented important advantages in aid alike of offensive and defensive operations. The right flank was rendered secure, not only by the position of Clinton's division, commanding the valley skirting the village of Merbe-braine, but also by the occupation of the town of Braine-la-

18th of June.

18th of June.

leud, whence Chassé's division could co-operate so as to render any attempt of the enemy to turn that flank a most hazardous experiment. Although the left of the main front line rested upon an open plain or elevated plateau, and was therefore completely *en l'air*, yet the village of Smohain, the farms of Ter-la-Haye and Papelotte, together with the scattered houses and numerous inclosures on the abrupt slope descending into the valley in front, by being well garnished with infantry, offered the means of protracted resistance; while cavalry was at hand, on the high ground, to cover the latter if forced to retire, and to frustrate the complete development of the enemy's disposition of attack. The latter description of force was also available in maintaining a vigilant look-out for any direct flank attack, which, however, was the less to be apprehended in consequence of the preconcerted Prussian co-operation in that quarter.

The position also afforded ample security for a retreat. The two broad high roads uniting at a point in rear of the centre, greatly facilitated the retirement of unbroken masses upon Mont St. Jean, while the village itself, and the numerous buildings and inclosures which lined the great road as far as the forest of Soignies, presented the ready means of securing the further retreat of those masses, which, it may be assumed, would have constituted a main central column. On the right, the villages of Merbe-braine, Le Mesnil, and

L'Estraye, connected with Braine-la-leud and with one another, as also with the forest, by several cross-roads, and intersected by numerous inclosures, were well calculated for the retirement of the extreme right of the army, by the advantages which they afforded for covering such retreat with light troops. On the left, the ground was more open, but the distance between the position and the forest was infinitely less, the latter stretching southward to the village of Verd-cocou; and the troops retiring in this direction, being much closer to the high road, would have their right in a great measure protected by the well defended retreat of the central column. The forest itself, consisting almost entirely of tall trees, unaccompanied by underwood, was passable for all arms; it was intersected by numerous roads and lanes in every direction; and its southern extremity, adjoining the high road, was thickly skirted with houses and gardens, adding considerably to its capabilities for a vigorous stand against the further advance of an enemy. The retrograde march of the detached forces from Tubize and Hal upon Brussels, and their junction with the remainder of the Anglo-allied army in the position of Uccle, between that capital and the forest of Soignies, will readily present itself to the minds of military men studying the dispositions and movements to which a retreat would have probably given rise; but this is a subject which, embracing as it naturally would, 18th of June.

18th of June. the consequent operations of the Prussians, opens a wide field for discussion, into which it is unnecessary to enter.

The general direction of the front line of the French army was nearly parallel with that of the Anglo-allies. The high road from Charleroi to Brussels, which intersected the Allied position near its centre, also passed through the centre of the French line. The point of this intersection was La Belle Alliance,* a small farm-house and inn; and the distance from the one position to the other, taken along the high road between those two points, was 1400 yards. About 200 yards in the French rear of this house is a summit, the altitude of which exceeds, by about 13 feet, that of any point along the Anglo-allied position. A ridge issuing from it, and extending in a north-easterly direction towards Frischermont, formed the position of the right wing of the front line of the

* The origin of this appellation is not a little curious, and, in order to explain it, it is necessary to remark that, on the other side of the road, and commencing opposite the end of the garden of La Belle Alliance, stands the farm-house of Trimotion; and about three hundred yards further on the road is a house, the same that was occupied in 1815 by Jean Batiste De Coster, who, during the battle, served Napoleon in the capacity of *guide du pays*. Upon the death of a former landlord of this public-house, his widow married the farmer of Trimotion; but losing him shortly afterwards, she consoled herself by taking for her third husband a peasant who lived in the other house alluded to as since occupied by De Coster; but here again death interrupted her happiness, when she once more embraced the married state, and espoused the *aubergiste* of her first house, which, from that time, obtained among the neighbouring peasantry the title it now bears—*la belle alliance*.

French army. On the west side, a road leading from the summit, descends rather rapidly as a hollow-way down into and across the long valley that takes its course towards Hougomont, then ascends until it reaches another ridge, along which it winds round that post, at a distance varying from 300 to about 440 yards, until it joins the Nivelles chaussée; and that winding road indicates pretty nearly the ground occupied by the left wing of the French front line. 18th of June.

The right wing of this line consisted of the 1st corps d'armée, commanded by Lieut. General Count d'Erlon, comprising four divisions of infantry, and one of light cavalry. Its left division, which was the 2nd, commanded by General Donzelot, rested its left upon La Belle Alliance. The 1st brigade of this division, under General Schmitz, consisted of the 13th regiment of light infantry and the 17th regiment of the line, each comprising two battalions. The 2nd brigade, under General Aulard, consisted of the 19th and 51st regiments of the line, each comprising two battalions. These brigades were deployed in two lines, the second at a distance of 60 yards in rear of the first. On the right of the 2nd division was the 1st, commanded by General Alix. Its 1st brigade, under General Bourgeois, consisted of the 54th and 55th regiments of the line, each comprising two battalions. Its 2nd brigade, under General Quiot, consisted of the 28th and 105th regiments of the

18th of June. line, each comprising two battalions. The brigades were deployed in two lines, the second at a distance of 60 yards in rear of the first. On the right of the 1st division stood the 3rd, commanded by General Marcognet. Its 1st brigade, under General Nognez, consisted of the 21st and 46th regiments of the line, and its second brigade, under General Grenier, of the 25th and 45th regiments of the line; all four regiments comprising two battalions each. These two brigades were, in like manner, deployed in two lines, the second at a distance of 60 yards in rear of the first. On the right of the 3rd division, nearest to the extremity of the ridge, and immediately opposite the farms of Papelotte and La Haye, was posted the 4th division, commanded by Lieut. General Durutte. Its 1st brigade, under General Pegot, consisted of the 8th and 29th regiments of the line; and its 2nd brigade, under General Brune, of the 85th and 95th regiments of the line; all four regiments comprising two battalions each. These two brigades were also deployed in two lines, the second at a distance of 60 yards in rear of the first. The cavalry attached to this corps, which was the 1st division, commanded by Lieut. General Jaquinot, was posted in a valley, on the right of the infantry; having in its front the village of Smohain, which it held in observation, as also the château of Frischermont, on the right of the valley; at the same time throwing out patroles in the direction of Ohain. It was deployed in

three lines. Its 1st brigade, under General Bruno, consisted of the 3rd and 7th chasseurs; and its 2nd brigade, under General Gobrecht, of the 3rd and 4th lancers. The artillery attached to the infantry-corps, consisting of 5 batteries of 8 guns each, (including a reserve-battery of 8 twelve-pounders,) was ranged along the front of the different divisions respectively; and the battery of horse-artillery—6 guns—attached to the 1st division of cavalry, was posted on the right of the latter. 18th of June.

The left wing of the front line of the French army was formed by the 2nd corps, commanded by Lieut. General Count Reille, comprising three divisions of infantry and one of light cavalry. Its right division, which was the 5th, commanded by Lieut. General Bachelu, rested its right upon La Belle Alliance, and was ranged along the descent from thence down into the valley, which, more westward, winds past Hougomont. The 1st brigade of this division, under General Husson, consisted of the 11th and 61st regiments of the line, each comprising two battalions; and the 2nd brigade, under General Campie, of the 72nd and 108th regiments of the line, the former comprising two, and the latter three, battalions. The brigades were deployed in two lines, the second at a distance of 60 yards in rear of the first. On the left of the 5th division, and upon the height facing the southern boundary of Hougomont, stood the 9th

18th of June. division, commanded by Lieut. General Foy. Its 1st brigade, under General Ganthieu, consisted of the 4th regiment of light infantry and of the 92nd regiment of the line, the former comprising three, the latter two, battalions. Its 2nd brigade, under General Jamin, consisted of the 93rd and 100th regiments of the line, each comprising two battalions. These two brigades were, in like manner, deployed in two lines, the second at a distance of 60 yards in rear of the first. On the left of the 9th division, and along the ridge opposite the western boundary of Hougomont, stood the 6th division, commanded by Prince Jerome Napoleon. Its 1st brigade, under General Baudouin, consisted of the 1st and 2nd regiments of light infantry and of the 3rd regiment of the line, each comprising three battalions; and its 2nd brigade of the 1st and 2nd regiments of the line, comprising two battalions each. These two brigades were also deployed in two lines, the second at a distance of 60 yards in rear of the first. On the left of the infantry was posted the light-cavalry attached to this corps, namely, the 2nd cavalry-division, commanded by Lieut. General Piré. Its 1st brigade, under General Hubert, consisted of the 1st and 6th chasseurs; and its 2nd brigade, under General Mathieu, of the 5th and 6th lancers. It stood across the Nivelles high road, in three deployed lines, rather under the crest of the ridge, on its reverse slope, and threw out picquets in the direc-

tion of Braine-la-leud, as also more to its left, thus keeping up a vigilant look-out around this flank of the army. 18th of June.

The second general line of the French army was formed in the following manner:—

In the centre, close along the west side of the Charleroi high road, stood the 6th corps, commanded by Lieut. General Count Lobau. Only two of its divisions, the 19th and 20th, were present; the 21st was with the army under Marshal Grouchy. Each of the two divisions formed a close column of battalions by grand divisions; the head of the column of the 19th division being distant about 100 yards in rear of the right of the 2nd corps, and an interval of about 200 yards was preserved between the rear of the 19th division and the head of the column of the 20th division. The former was commanded by Lieut. General Simmer, and its 1st brigade, under General Simmer, consisted of the 5th and 11th, and its 2nd brigade, under General Belain, of the 27th and 84th, regiments of the line; all four regiments comprising two battalions each. The 20th division was commanded by Lieut. General Jeannin; its 1st brigade, under General Bony, consisted of the 5th regiment of light infantry, and of the 10th regiment of the line; and its 2nd brigade, under General Tromelin, of the 47th and 107th regiments of the line; all four regiments comprising two battalions each. There were three batteries of foot-artillery, of 8 guns

18th of June. each, attached to the divisions, including one of reserve; as also a horse-battery of 6 guns; they were posted on the left flank of the corps.

On the right of these two divisions of the 6th corps, and separated from them by the high road only, were stationed the 3rd light cavalry-division, commanded by Lieut. General Domont, and the 5th light cavalry-division, commanded by Lieut. General Subervie (belonging to the 1st cavalry-corps, commanded by General Count Pajol). They were formed in close column of regiments by squadrons. The 1st brigade of the former, under General Domanget, consisted of the 4th and 9th chasseurs; and the 2nd brigade, under General Vinot, of the 12th chasseurs. The 1st brigade of the 5th division, under General Colbert, consisted of the 1st and the 2nd lancers; and the 2nd brigade, under General Merlin, of the 11th chasseurs. The two batteries of horse-artillery attached to these two divisions, comprising 6 guns each, were posted on the right flank of the column.

The right wing of the second French general line was composed of the 4th cavalry-corps, commanded by Lieut. General Count Milhaud, which was posted on a parallel ridge, in rear of the two central divisions of the 1st infantry-corps, and distant from them about two hundred yards. It was deployed in two lines, the second at a distance of sixty yards in rear of the first. The corps consisted of two heavy cavalry-divisions—the 13th

commanded by Lieut. General Wautier, and the 14th, under Lieut. General Delort. The 1st brigade of the 13th division, under General Dubois, consisted of the 1st and 4th cuirassiers; the 2nd, under General Travers, of the 7th and 12th cuirassiers. The 1st brigade of the 14th division, under General Farine, consisted of the 5th and 6th cuirassiers; and the 2nd, under General Vial, of the 9th and 10th cuirassiers. The two batteries of horse-artillery attached to this corps, comprising 6 guns each, were stationed, one in the centre, and the other on the left flank. 18th of June.

The left wing of the French second general line, composed of the 3rd cavalry-corps, commanded by General Kellermann, (Count de Valmy,) was posted about 200 yards in rear of the centre of the 2nd infantry-corps. It was deployed in two lines, the second at a distance of 60 yards in rear of the first. The corps consisted of two heavy cavalry-divisions; the 11th, commanded by Lieut. General L'Heritier, and the 12th, under Lieut. General Roussel. The 1st brigade of the 11th division, under General Piquet, consisted of the 2nd and 7th dragoons; and the 2nd, under General Guyton, of the 8th and 11th cuirassiers. The 1st brigade of the 12th division, under General Blancard, consisted of the 1st and 2nd carabiniers; and the 2nd, of the 2nd and 3rd cuirassiers. The two batteries of horse-artillery

18th of June. attached to this corps, comprising 6 guns each, were posted one upon each flank.

The third general line, forming the grand reserve of the whole line of battle, and comprising the entire force of the imperial guards, cavalry and infantry, under the command of Lieut. General Drouot,* was thus formed:—

The infantry of the imperial guard constituted the centre of the reserve. It consisted of four regiments of grenadiers, four regiments of chasseurs, two regiments of voltigeurs, and two regiments of tirailleurs; each regiment divided into two battalions. The 1st and 2nd regiments of grenadiers, and the 1st and 2nd of chasseurs, formed the old guard, under Lieut. General Count Friant; the 3rd and 4th regiments of grenadiers, and the 3rd and 4th of chasseurs, formed the *moyenne*, or middle guard, under Lieut. General Count Morand; the four regiments of voltigeurs and tirailleurs constituted the young guard, under Lieut. General Duhesme. This force was posted somewhat in advance of the farm of Rossomme, in six lines, of four battalions each, at a distance of 20 yards from one another, and so disposed that the Charleroi high road alone separated the two right, from the two left, battalions of each line.

* He was Major General of the Staff of the Guards, and commanded in the absence of Marshal Mortier, Duke of Treviso, who was left sick at Beaumont.

To each description of the infantry of the imperial guard, the old, the middle, and the young guard, two batteries, of 8 guns each, were attached. These were stationed on either flank, and the reserve-artillery of the guard, consisting of 24 guns, was posted in rear of these lines. The right wing of the third line, or reserve, consisted of the light cavalry of the imperial guard, commanded by General Lefebvre-Desnouettes, namely the chasseurs and lancers of the guard. It was posted at a distance of about 200 yards in rear of the 4th cavalry-corps, and deployed in two lines, the second at a distance of 60 yards in rear of the first. The two batteries of horse-artillery belonging to the corps, comprising 6 guns each, were posted in its centre. The left wing of the third line, or reserve, consisted of the heavy cavalry of the imperial guard, commanded by General Guyot, namely, the grenadiers and dragoons of the guard. It was stationed in rear of the 3rd cavalry-corps, and deployed in two lines, the second at a distance of 60 yards in rear of the first. Its two batteries of horse-artillery, comprising 6 guns each, were posted in the centre. 18th of June.

This admirable order of battle, at once grand, simple, and imposing, and presenting to its skilful designer the most ample means of sustaining, by an immediate and efficient support, any attack, from whatever point he might wish to direct it,

18th of June. and of possessing everywhere a respectable force at hand to oppose any attack upon himself, from whatever quarter it might be made, was no less remarkable for the regularity and precision with which the several masses, constituting thirteen distinct columns, advanced to their destined stations, than for the unusual degree of warlike pomp and high martial bearing with which the lines drew up in this mighty battle-array. The movements throughout were executed under the cheering and spirit-stirring sounds of bugles, drums, and trumpets, sending forth the long-cherished national military airs of the republic and of the empire. The weather had cleared up a little, and to the Anglo-allied army, the crowning of the opposite heights by the French lines, with all its accompanying circumstances, presented a magnificent spectacle.

Napoleon has frequently been blamed for having thus consumed some very precious time in a mere ostentatious display of his forces. Public opinion, however, should not suffer itself to be too easily influenced by the apparent justness of such censure, and it would be ungenerous to the established renown of the French leader not to attach due weight to the following circumstances. In the account of the battle attributed to the Emperor's own dictation, one cause of delay, in commencing offensive operations, is represented to have been the soft and miry state of the ground after the ex-

cessive rain which had fallen during the night, in consequence of which it was found impossible to manœuvre the artillery and the cavalry, and it was considered advisable to wait until the ground had, in some degree, resumed its natural consistency. When, therefore, the manœuvring of these two arms was pronounced to be practicable, though attended with some difficulty, which, however, it was added, would gradually disappear, the employment of the interval in an orderly and a deliberate formation of a well-defined order of battle, was a measure scarcely questionable *at the moment*, however much the *subsequent* course of events may have proved that it militated against the chances of success on the part of the French. The additional impulse which this imposing spectacle was calculated to impart to the moral force of his troops, is also well worthy of consideration. His soldiers, as they contemplated the extended double front line of infantry, disposed as if about to enfold the enemy in a deadly embrace, and the fluttering of gay lance-flags on either extremity indicating that its flanks were duly protected; as they glanced at the second general line, a double one of cavalry, superbly mounted, and proudly mailed in glittering helmet and cuirass; and, as they scanned the well disposed reserves and serried centre, their reliance on their own strength and in the resources of their leader was unbounded, their anticipations of success were heightened, and their eager longing

18th of June.

18th of June. for the contest was greatly augmented. And, while adverting to the grand spectacle in a moral point of view, it would be well to consider whether it may not have also been designed to exert a powerful influence on that portion of the Anglo-allied forces with which the Emperor was tampering, in the full expectation of seeing them again range themselves under his victorious eagles, but which Wellington, with judicious foresight and prompt address, broke up as a united body, and distributed among his British troops; thus securing himself against the enactment of a scene similar to that which so powerfully contributed to Napoleon's disaster on the plains of Leipzig.

But supposing it to be admitted upon these grounds that the delay of the attack, having once been determined, was judiciously and advantageously employed, we ought also to consider whether the delay itself may not have been superinduced by motives of far higher consideration.

Although the miry state of the ground has been put forward as the ostensible cause, can we for a moment imagine that Napoleon was the man to have allowed himself to be deterred by such an obstacle from commencing the attack at an earlier hour, had he, at the moment, been sufficiently acquainted with the actual state of things to foresee that the delay, together with the possibility of a lengthened contest, and of the approach of aid to the British General from the Prussian side, tended

to render his situation one of extreme peril? May we not rather be justified in inferring, that his object was to gain time for the due execution and successful development of Grouchy's operations? The despatch which the Emperor had received from Grouchy, dated Gembloux, 17th June, at 10 P.M., (see page 297,) clearly explained that General's intentions, which were, that should the mass of the Prussian forces retire upon Wavre, he would follow them in that direction, so as to prevent them from either reaching Brussels or forming a junction with Wellington; but that if, on the other hand, they should fall back upon Perwès, he would advance towards that town in pursuit of them. In the former case, Napoleon's delay was likely to facilitate the combined operation, because, in order to prevent the junction with Wellington, Grouchy required sufficient time to throw himself between the Prussians and the Emperor, and, in the latter case, the delay would be immaterial, because then the Prussian co-operation with Wellington was not to be apprehended, and the battle with the Anglo-allied army would have to be fought by the Emperor, unsupported by Grouchy. It may, perhaps, be argued that Napoleon, by commencing his attack much earlier, would not have been under the necessity of employing a considerable portion of his reserve against the Prussians, in defence of his right flank, at a time when he so urgently needed them for following up and

18th of June.

18th of June. strengthening his attacks upon the Duke of Wellington's line. There existed, however, no such striking disparity, in point of numbers, between Wellington's forces and his own, as to warrant his throwing away a chance, amounting, according to the information he had already received, almost to a certainty, of being enabled to bring his greatest mass to bear against each army separately; and which would doubtless have been the case as regards the Anglo-allied army, had Grouchy, by the adoption of more vigorous and energetic measures, manœuvred in such a manner as to sufficiently impede the Prussian co-operation by posting one of his corps so as to command the defiles of St. Lambert and Lasne, and holding the other in reserve, to be employed by either the Emperor or himself, according to circumstances.

Whether Napoleon was really actuated by any such motives, must remain a doubtful point. These remarks, however, are offered for the consideration of those who censure him for his delay in commencing the battle of Waterloo.

The strength of the Anglo-allied army in the field was as follows:—

	Infantry.	Cavalry.	Artillery.	Guns.
British	15,181	5,843	2,967	78
King's German Legion	3,301	1,991	526	18
Hanoverians	10,258	497	465	12
Brunswickers	4,586	866	510	16
Nassauers	2,880			
Dutch-Belgians	13,402	3,205	1,177	32
Total	49,608	12,402	5,645	156

18th of June.

GRAND TOTAL.

Infantry	49,608
Cavalry	12,402
Artillery	5,645
	67,655 men, and 156 guns.*

The French army consisted of:—

Infantry	48,950
Cavalry	15,765
Artillery	7,232
Total . .	71,947 men, and 246 guns.†

The martial sounds already adverted to as having accompanied the march of the French columns into position, had scarcely been wafted towards the Anglo-allied army, when mounted officers were discerned galloping along the opposite heights, and taking up the necessary alignments; and, presently, the simultaneous flashing of bayonets over dark masses, on various points, and the roll of drums, now become more distinctly audible, announced the arrival of the heads of the columns destined to constitute the front line. As this gradually developed itself, and was seen extending on either side, from La Belle Alliance, and apparently almost overlapping both flanks of the Allies, the scene became truly imposing and highly exciting. The two armies were now fairly in presence of each other, and their mutual observation was governed by the most intense interest, and the most

* For detailed return—See Appendix XXX.

† For detailed return—See Appendix XXXI.

18th of June.

scrutinizing anxiety. In a still greater degree did these feelings actuate their commanders, while watching each other's preparatory movements, and minutely scanning the surface of the arena on which tactical skill, habitual prowess, physical strength, and moral courage, were to decide, not alone their own, but, in all probability, the fate of Europe. Apart from national interests and considerations, and viewed solely in connection with the opposite characters of the two illustrious chiefs, the approaching contest was contemplated with anxious solicitude by the whole military world. Need this create surprise when we reflect, that the struggle was one for mastery between the far-famed conqueror of Italy, and the victorious liberator of the Peninsula; between the triumphant vanquisher of Eastern Europe, and the bold and successful invader of the South of France! Never was the issue of a single battle looked forward to as involving consequences of such vast importance—of such universal influence.

CHAPTER X.

Napoleon's instructions to Grouchy, previously to the commencement of the battle of Waterloo—A Prussian officer joins the extreme left of the Anglo-allied army, and reports that Bülow's corps has reached St. Lambert—Napoleon passes along the French lines—The battle commences, about half-past eleven o'clock, with an attack upon the wood of Hougomont, by part of Prince Jerome's division—The cannonade is opened by the guns of Cleeves's foot-battery of the King's German legion—The French gain possession of a portion of the wood and other inclosures of Hougomont—They are driven out—The French reconnoitre the Anglo-allied left—Jerome renews his attack, supported by part of Foy's division—Fire opened upon the attacking troops by the batteries posted with Clinton's division—The French gain the wood—Signal service rendered by Bull's howitzer-battery—The French skirmishers succeed in turning the right of Hougomont, and in forcing the great gate, which, however, is soon closed against the assailants—They then press forward against the right of the Allied front line, and force Webber Smith's horse-battery to retire into a hollow-way to refit—They are charged and driven back by four companies of the Coldstream guards, under Lieut. Colonel Woodford, which force then joins the defenders of Hougomont—The French, on debouching from the wood into the great orchard, are gallantly charged and driven back by Lieut. Colonel Lord Saltoun with the light companies of the 1st brigade of guards—The latter, being attacked in both front and flank, are compelled to fall back upon the hollow-way in rear of the great orchard—On being reinforced by two companies of the 3rd regiment of guards, they resume the offensive, and clear the orchard of the enemy—Ney's dispositions for a grand attack upon the left wing and centre of the Anglo-allied army—Napoleon perceives troops in motion, at some distance on his right—He detaches Domont's and Subervie's light cavalry-brigades in that direction—He ascertains that the troops he has seen belong to the Prussian corps d'armée of Count Bülow—His orders to Grouchy—Napoleon neglects to adopt effectual measures for securing his right flank.

WHILE the preparatory dispositions, alluded to in the preceding chapter, were in progress, Napoleon 18th of June.

18th of June. ordered the following despatch to be addressed to Grouchy :—

'En avant de la ferme de Caillou,
le 18 juin, à 10 heures du matin.

'Monsieur le Maréchal,

'L'Empereur a reçu votre dernier rapport daté de Gembloux.* Vous ne parlez à sa Majesté que des deux colonnes prussiennes qui ont passé à Sauvenières et Sarra-Walin ; cependant des rapports disent qu'une troisieme colonne, qui était assez forte, a passé à Gery et Gentinnes, se dirigeant sur Wavres.

'L'Empereur me charge de vous prévenir qu'en ce moment S.M. va faire attaquer l'armée anglaise qui a pris position à Waterloo, près de la forêt de Soignes ; ainsi S.M. désire que vous dirigiez vos mouvemens sur Wavres,† afin de vous rapprocher de nous, vous mettre en rapport d'opérations et lier les communications, poussant devant vous les corps de l'armée prussienne qui ont pris cette direction et qui auraient pu s'arrêter à Wavres, où vous devez arriver le plus tôt possible. Vous ferez suivre les colonnes ennemies qui ont pris sur votre droite par quelques corps légers, afin d'observer leurs mouvemens et ramasser leurs fuyards ; instruisez-moi immédiatement de vos dispositions et de votre marche, ainsi que des nouvelles que vous avez sur les ennemis, et ne négligez pas de lier vos communications avec nous ; l'Empereur désire avoir très souvent de vos nouvelles.

'le Major Général Duc de Dalmatie.'

* See page 297.

† In the "Fragments historiques relatifs à la campagne de 1815," published by Marshal Grouchy, the latter has referred, in justification of his having moved his whole force upon Wavre, to the above passage in Napoleon's despatch. It must, however, be borne in mind, that in the verbal instructions given by Napoleon to Grouchy, on the field of Ligny, no mention whatever was made of Wavre, and that the indication of that direction, to which allusion was made for the first time in the above despatch, resulted

18th of June.

It will thus be seen that Grouchy's report, despatched from Gembloux on the previous night,* was well calculated to inspire the Emperor with great confidence as to the result of his present plan of operations, notwithstanding the very little progress that had hitherto been made in that quarter, and which, as already remarked, must be ascribed principally to his own inactivity during the early part of the 17th. He approved of the movement upon Wavre, in pursuit of the great mass of the Prussian army, but at the same time expressed his desire that it should be executed in such a manner as to draw the detached force more within the sphere of the operations of the main French army; and, above all, he enforced the necessity of maintaining a close communication with the latter.

Some time before the battle commenced, a Prussian patrole reached the village of Smohain, in which was posted the picquet of the 10th British hussars, under Captain Taylor,† whom the officer accompanying the patrole desired to report to the Duke of Wellington that General Count Bülow was at St. Lambert, and advancing with his *corps*

solely from Grouchy's own suspicion, expressed in his report, to which the above letter was a reply, that a portion of the Prussians would endeavour, by retiring on Wavre, to join Wellington's forces, and his intention, should such appear to be the case, of following them in that direction, so as to prevent the threatened junction.

* See page 297.

† See page 330.

18th of June.

d'armée. Captain Taylor immediately despatched Lieutenant Lindsey,* of the 10th, with the intelligence to head-quarters, as directed. The Prussian officer was certainly ignorant of the very slow progress made by the main body of Bülow's corps, and the information which he thus conveyed to the Duke, before the battle had commenced, naturally led the latter to calculate upon a much earlier arrival of the Prussians than could possibly take place; for, in point of fact, it was only Bülow's advanced guard which had then reached St. Lambert.

The formation of the French lines was scarcely completed when the magnificent and animating spectacle which they presented was heightened in an extraordinary degree by the passing of the Emperor along them, attended by a numerous and brilliant staff. The troops hailed him with loud and fervent acclamations. There was depicted on their brows a deep-rooted confidence in his ability, with such an army, to chain victory to the car in which he had already advanced in triumph to within a few miles of the capital of Belgium. They exulted in the idea that they were now fairly ranged in battle-array, under the chief of their choice, and the idol of their devotion, against the army of that nation which of all others had proved the most inveterate and the most enduring in its hos-

* Lieutenant William H. B. Lindsey died on the 1st June, 1822.

tility to France; a nation which had not only by its wealth cemented and held together the great European league which had once precipitated that idol from the throne, but had also flung into the scale her own native strength and valour, by which the fleets of the Empire had been destroyed, its armies driven out of the Peninsula, and the sceptres of Spain and Portugal wrested from its grasp. They appeared as if excited by the assurance, that the hour had arrived in which the disasters of the Nile and Trafalgar, of Salamanca and Vittoria, were to be cast into the dark shade of oblivion, by the dazzling splendour of the triumph about to be achieved. 18th of June.

Never throughout the whole of his career had Napoleon received from his soldiers more unequivocal demonstrations of attachment to his person, of unlimited confidence in his power, of complete devotion to his cause, and of absolute submission to his will, than were manifested in this short and fatal campaign, by which that career was terminated. With an army thus animated by one sentiment, and presenting in appearance and material all that his practised eye could desire, it may readily be conceived that he fully participated in the general confidence of a signal victory.

Wellington's dispositions remained as previously described. Shortly before the action commenced, he rode down to Hougomont, and, proceeding by the lane which crosses the wood in the direction of

18th of June. La Belle Alliance, remained a few minutes at the point where the lane reaches the eastern boundary of the wood. Having made his observations upon that portion of the enemy's line which came under his view, he ordered the light companies of the British guards that were in the wood to be relieved by the Nassau battalion and the Hanoverian light infantry. The former were then withdrawn to the great orchard, where the light companies of the 1st brigade remained, while those of the 2nd brigade moved on, along the rear of the inclosures, to the lane which passes between the right of the buildings and the kitchen-garden, and leads into the wood on that side.

Napoleon, having completed the inspection of his troops, proceeded to take up his own station upon the height in rear of La Belle Alliance, which afforded him a commanding view of the whole field. The infantry-brigades speedily formed lines of battalion-columns respectively. The state of the ground was reported practicable for the movements of artillery. All was in perfect readiness.

The anxiously-looked-for moment had now arrived. The Emperor sent an order to Reille to begin the battle by an attack upon Hougomont; and it was about half-past eleven o'clock when, from the right of Prince Jerome's divison, a column, advancing towards the south-western boundary of the wood, rapidly extended itself into a

strong line of skirmishers. As they approached the wood, a few straggling shots from behind the outermost trees and hedges gave warning that the defenders were prepared for resistance, and announced to both armies that the battle had actually commenced. The French, hastening their advance, to obtain a better view of their opponents, began to single them out; and the shots from both sides, quickening in succession, speedily increased into a brisk and well-sustained fire of musketry. Jerome's supporting columns had not advanced far when a remarkably well-directed fire upon them, from Captain Cleeves's foot-battery of the German legion, in front of Alten's division, opened the cannonade from the Anglo-allied position. It was instantly followed up by the batteries in front of Cooke's division; and so decided was the effect upon the enemy's columns that they were forced to retire. The batteries of Reille's corps now opened in their turn, to draw off the fire from their columns. Napoleon sent an order to Kellermann to push forward his twelve pieces of horse-artillery into the front line, facing Hougomont. The intervals between the reports from the guns on either side rapidly diminished: in a brief space of time no intervals could be distinguished; and the cannonade, increasing in violence every moment, now thundered forth in one continued roar. 18th of June.

"——— deep-throated engines belch'd, whose roar
Imbowel'd with outrageous noise the air."

18th of June.

French skirmishers, followed by fresh supports, had made good their entrance into the wood, and such was the boldness of their advance that they soon drove the Nassau battalion and Hanoverian riflemen before them. They were also pushing forward, in considerable force, across the inclosures adjoining the left of the wood. At this moment Wellington gave orders, in person, to Major Bull's British howitzer horse-battery, which had just been drawn up on that part of the main ridge which was immediately in rear of the great orchard of Hougomont, to dislodge the enemy's infantry from those inclosures by means of shells. This service, which, considering the proximity of the Allied troops in the wood, was of a very delicate nature, was executed with admirable skill, and attended with the desired effect. The enemy was forced to abandon the fields in front of the great orchard; from which the light companies of the 1st brigade of guards now moved on, as did also those of the 2nd brigade, from the lane and kitchen-garden on the right, to relieve the Nassauers and Hanoverians in the wood. They dashed forward with the most determined resolution, blazing away in the very faces of their opponents, whose further advance they completely checked; and then, gallantly pressing on, they gradually succeeded in clearing the wood of the French skirmishers.

With the exception of the cannonade maintained

between the French left, and the Anglo-allied right, wing, and which was gradually extending towards the opposite extremities of the hostile lines, the action was as yet confined to the post of Hougomont. About this time, a body of French cavalry, issuing from the low ground near Papelotte, approached that part of the Anglo-allied left wing which was occupied by Best's Hanoverian infantry brigade, and Captain von Rettberg's Hanoverian foot-battery. It was a strong *reconnaissance*, made by the French to ascertain whether the summit on which the above battery was posted, had really been intrenched, its appearance, as viewed from the opposite heights, having induced a supposition that such was the case. Best, expecting to be attacked, immediately formed his brigade into battalion-squares, but the French cavalry speedily retired. 18th of June.

Jerome now moved down fresh columns to reinforce his skirmishers. They were directed more against the Allied right of the wood, while a part of Foy's division was ordered to support the attack by a simultaneous advance against the front. The descent of Jerome's troops was observed from the position of the extreme right of the Allied second line, which afforded a partial view up the valley on that side of Hougomont. Two guns were therefore detached, under Captain Napier,* from Cap-

* Major Charles George Napier retired from the service in 1827.

18th of June. tain Bolton's battery, to open a fire upon the advancing columns, but they were instantly cannonaded by the batteries on the French extreme left, particularly by the horse-battery of Piré's light cavalry, on the height intersected by the Nivelles road. The remaining guns of the battery were brought into action, as were also those of Major Sympher's Hanoverian horse-battery; and a vigorous fire was now maintained against both the attacking troops and the French guns. Lieut. Colonel Webber Smith, whose British horse-battery was also with Clinton's division, but lower down the slope, commenced firing up the valley, across the Nivelles road, at one of Jerome's columns, but on ascertaining that the latter was somewhat beyond the effectual range of his 6-pounders, he detached an officer to the right of the front line, in rear of Hougomont, to discover whether a more commanding position could be obtained for his battery on that part of the field.

In the mean time, Jerome's skirmishers, having been very strongly reinforced, renewed their attack upon the wood, in conjunction with Foy's infantry on their right. The light companies of the British guards presented a stout and desperate resistance, but were forced to yield to an overwhelming superiority of numbers. Retiring from tree to tree, and frequently hazarding a bold and obstinate stand, by which they suffered most severely, they at length withdrew from the unavailing contest;

those of the Coldstream and 3rd regiment seeking shelter partly in the lane adjoining the right of the château, and partly behind a haystack which fronted the wood near the south-west angle of the buildings; while those of the 1st regiment fell back into the great orchard, on the left. The French skirmishers, finding themselves relieved for the moment from any immediate pressure upon their front, now rapidly advanced towards the buildings and garden. The hedge which lined the wood on this side appeared to them, as it gradually presented itself to their view, to form also the boundary of the great garden. In the full confidence that this important post was now within their grasp, they rushed forward at the *pas de charge* to force an entrance. They were instantly and fatally undeceived. A deadly fire bursting forth from the loop-holes and platforms along the garden-wall, which was parallel to, and about 30 yards distant from, the hedge, laid prostrate the leading files. Those which came up in rapid succession were staggered by the sudden and unexpected appearance of this little fortress. Not venturing upon an escalade, they were forced to take advantage of such cover as was afforded by the hedge and trees, whence they kept up a popping fire, though at fearful odds with opponents so well concealed by the wall, as also by a row of apple-trees which ran along its exterior.

18th of June.

The French infantry were pushing forward

18th of June. through the wood in support of this attack, when Major Bull's horse-battery re-commenced its fire, and a shower of howitzer-shells fell amongst them, causing the greatest destruction and confusion in their ranks. Again the defenders dashed forward from the flanks, and regained a considerable portion of the wood; whereupon Major Bull ceased firing in that direction, and pointed his guns on strong columns of French infantry in support, which he succeeded in causing to retrograde, notwithstanding the very galling fire to which he was himself at that time exposed, not only from the batteries in his front, but also from Piré's horse-battery on the French height adjoining the Nivelles road, by which his own battery was completely enfiladed. The French that were in the wood having rallied, and obtained a vast preponderance of force, now advanced in a most determined manner against the light infantry of the British guards, and compelled the latter to retire to their former posts on the flanks of the château and gardens. At the same time, Jerome's light troops were advancing rapidly, and in great force, against the right of the buildings. That portion of the light companies of the Coldstream and 3rd regiment of guards which was outside the farm made a gallant stand, under cover of the haystack, and from the lane before mentioned. The haystack itself was set on fire by the French in one of their attacks, and was now in full blaze. These guards-

men held their ground with the greatest bravery until they saw themselves completely outflanked, and in danger of being cut off from all retreat. They then hastily withdrew into the great court-yard by the gate which faces the Allied position, and which they instantly closed and endeavoured to block up with ladders, posts, barrows, or whatever was nearest at hand. The French, however, succeeded in forcing the gate; but the defenders betook themselves to the nearest cover, whence they poured a fire upon the intruders, and then rushing forward, a struggle ensued which was distinguished by the most intrepid courage on both sides. At length, Lieut. Colonel Macdonell, Captain Wyndham,* Ensigns Gooch† and Hervey,‡ and Serjeant Graham,§ of the Coldstream guards,

18th of June.

* Now Major General Wyndham.

† Lieut. Colonel Henry Gooch retired from the service on the 11th of June, 1841.

‡ Captain James William Hervey retired from the service in October, 1837.

§ This individual deserves honourable mention, having greatly distinguished himself during the memorable defence of Hougomont. At a later period of the day, when in the ranks along the garden-wall facing the wood, and when the struggle was most severe in that quarter, he asked Lieut. Colonel Macdonell's permission to fall out. The Colonel, knowing the character of the man, expressed his surprise at the request made at such a moment. Graham explained that his brother lay wounded in one of the buildings then on fire, that he wished to remove him to a place of safety, and that he would then lose no time in rejoining the ranks. The request was granted: Graham succeeded in snatching his brother from the horrible fate which menaced him; laid him in a ditch in rear of the inclosures, and, true to his word, was again at his post.

Early in August of that year, and while the Anglo-allied army was at Paris, the Duke of Wellington received a letter from the Rev. Mr. Norcross, rector of Framlingham, in Suffolk, expressing his wish to confer

18th of June. by dint of great personal strength and exertions, combined with extraordinary bravery and perseverance, succeeded in closing the gate against their assailants. Those of the latter who had entered the court-yard fell a sacrifice to their undaunted and conspicuous gallantry. The remainder of the French skirmishers, passing on by the left and to the rear of Hougomont, crossed the avenue leading to it from the Nivelles road, and the adjacent rivulet, spread themselves over some broken ground partially covered with brushwood. They were now immediately under the position to which Lieut. Colonel Smith had moved his battery from its former station on the other side of the Nivelles road, and which was in front of the extreme right of the first line of the Anglo-allied army. This battery had just been hotly engaged with, and had suffered severely from, the horse-battery posted in front of Piré's light cavalry-brigade, which had

a pension of £10 a-year, for life, on some Waterloo soldier to be named by His Grace. The Duke requested Sir John Byng (now Lord Strafford) to choose a man from the 2nd brigade of guards, which had so highly distinguished itself in the defence of Hougomont. Out of numerous instances of good conduct evinced by several individuals of each battalion, Serjeant James Graham, of the light company of the Coldstream, was selected to receive the proffered annuity, as notified in brigade-orders of the 9th of August, 1815. This was paid to him during two years, at the expiration of which period it ceased, in consequence of the bankruptcy of the benevolent donor. Graham is now an inmate of the Royal Hospital of Kilmainham; and amongst the gallant veterans who enjoy the comforts afforded to them, in their declining years, in that venerable institution, there are few who, in the course of their service, have acquired such honourable distinction.

previously directed its fire upon Bull's guns, and which maintained the cannonade with Lieut. Colonel Smith's battery, for the purpose of covering the advance of these light troops. Smith had succeeded in silencing the fire of his opponent, when the French skirmishers, taking advantage of both the broken ground and the high corn beyond it, suddenly opened upon his battery a popping fire so destructive in its effects, that in a few moments several of the gunners and horses were killed, and so much damage was sustained by the limbers, that it became absolutely necessary to withdraw the guns into a little hollow-way that led from the rear of the battery into the Nivelles road, and in which it remained some time for the purpose of re-fitting and getting into order. This daring onset of the French skirmishers was checked by the advance of four companies of the Coldstream regiment of guards, under Lieut. Colonel Woodford.* They then fell back to the wall of the farm-yard, near which they collected a considerable force, when Colonel Woodford charged them. They gave way immediately, and withdrew from the contest, which afforded Colonel Woodford an opportunity of entering the farm with a part of the reinforcement by the side-door in the lane. The remainder of the detached force occupied the

18th of June.

* Now Lieut. General Sir Alexander Woodford, K.C.B., G.C.M.G.

18th of June. inclosures between the château and the Nivelles road.

During this advance of the French skirmishers against the extreme right of the Allied front line, the troops which formed their support attempted again to force open the rear gate of Hougomont. The individuals before mentioned as having closed the gate, were, at the time, occupied in rendering it more secure by placing against it some pieces of ash timber that lay in the yard. The French failing in their endeavours to push in the gate, a brave grenadier volunteered to climb over and open it from the inside. Captain Wyndham, on perceiving the latter at the top of the gate, instantly desired Serjeant Graham, whose musket he was holding whilst the latter was bringing forward another piece of timber, to drop the wood, take his firelock, and shoot the intruder. The order was instantly obeyed; and the intrepid assailant who, for any useful result, ought to have been accompanied by a score of his comrades, fell beneath Graham's deadly aim. It was at this moment that the French skirmishers who had advanced against the main position, were falling back upon their support, and the whole of these troops were driven off by the advance of the four companies of the Coldstream guards, detached from the main position, as previously described.

In the mean time, the French infantry in the

wood, finding their advance against the garden so suddenly checked, endeavoured to turn it by its left. With this view, they were debouching through a large gap in the fence, forming an outlet from the wood into the orchard, when Lieut. Colonel Lord Saltoun, seizing the favourable opportunity, made a most gallant charge upon the head of the column with the light companies of the 1st brigade of guards, and succeeded in driving the enemy back into the wood. 18th of June.

Shortly afterwards a large body of the enemy's light troops began to advance stealthily along the eastern hedge of the Hougomont inclosures, communicating at the same time with the infantry in the wood on their left. This was immediately followed by a direct front attack upon the orchard, which compelled Lord Saltoun gradually to withdraw his greatly reduced force from tree to tree, until he reached the hollow-way in rear of that inclosure.

The light troops in front of Alten's division, having perceived the French creeping along the hedge so as to turn the left flank of Hougomont, were on the point of forming to oppose them, but on the latter being pointed out to the Prince of Orange, who had just come to the front to make his observations, he coolly remarked:—"No, don't stir—the Duke is sure to see that movement, and will take some step to counteract it." He had scarcely spoken, when two companies of the 3rd regiment of British guards, detached from the

18th of June. Allied line, were seen advancing along the same hedge, in an opposite direction, to meet them. Lord Saltoun being thus reinforced upon his left, and the French skirmishers in his front having become exposed to a sharp flanking fire from the guards lining the eastern garden-wall, he resumed the offensive; cleared the orchard of the enemy, and re-occupied its front hedge; while the detachment on the left drove the French along the outer hedge, and down into the hollow whence they had debouched, and then joined the troops in the great orchard. The front hedge of the orchard, the front wall of the garden, with the lane and avenue on the right, constituted at this time the outer line of the defence of Hougomont.

During the progress of the contest at Hougomont, Ney had been occupied in making his preparatory dispositions for carrying into execution Napoleon's intended grand attack upon the centre and left of the Anglo-allied line.* The troops destined for this service consisted of the whole of d'Erlon's corps d'armée, and of Roussel's division of Kellermann's cavalry-corps. Their advance was to be covered and supported by no less than ten batteries, which were now brought forward and posted along a ridge that intervened between the French right, and the Allied left, wing, afford-

* Napoleon had given orders that the battle should commence with the above attack; but this disposition was subsequently altered, and Reille was directed to begin by attacking Hougomont.

ing the guns a range of from 600 to 800 yards of the Duke's line. These batteries consisted of the three 12-pounder batteries of the 1st, 2nd, and 6th corps, drawn up with their left close upon the Charleroi road; of the four divisional foot-batteries; of the horse-battery belonging to Jaquinot's light cavalry-brigade; and of the two horse-batteries of Milhaud's corps of cuirassiers, which stood in second line, in rear of d'Erlon's corps—altogether, 74 guns. 18th of June.

This imposing force of infantry, cavalry, and artillery, exclusive of the ample cavalry-reserves at hand, was not more than commensurate with the importance of the object which Napoleon had in view. His aim was not only to turn the Allied left, but also to force the centre of the position, and, by gaining possession of the farms of La Haye Sainte, and Mont St. Jean, to cut off Wellington's main line of communication by the high road to Brussels, and, at the same time, to prevent any contemplated junction of the Prussian and Anglo-allied armies. This appeared to him preferable to any plan of operation against the Allied right, where the skilful dispositions made by the Duke would require such a plan to embrace the attack and repulse of the troops occupying Braine-la-leud, and the post of Vieux Foriez, as well as the forcing of the position, *en potence*, held by Lord Hill; a consideration which, combined with a knowledge of the existence of a considerable

18th of June. body of Allied troops near Hal, and the fear of allowing himself to be induced into too great an extension of his own force towards his left, caused him to resign all idea of attempting any movement of importance in that quarter. He felt, moreover, that even a successful attack upon the right would, in all probability, induce the Duke to fall back upon the Prussians, and thus effect that junction which it was his great object to frustrate; whereas, an attack upon the Anglo-allied left, which was not so strong, if successful, held out to him the prospect of his being enabled, by aid of the presumed vigorous co-operation on the part of Grouchy, and the momentarily expected arrival of a portion of that Marshal's forces on his own right, to defeat both armies in detail.

The batteries had been regularly posted and fully prepared for action, and the infantry columns had advanced to the inner brow of the intervening ridge, when Ney sent word to the Emperor that the preliminary arrangements were completed, and that he only awaited His Majesty's orders to commence the attack. Napoleon immediately took a general view of the field of battle, and continuing his observations beyond his right, in order to discover, if possible, any indication of the approach either of Grouchy or of a hostile force, he perceived in the direction of St. Lambert an indistinct mass, having the appearance of a body of troops; and, pointing out the object to Soult, who was near

him at the time, asked his opinion, whereupon the Marshal observed, that he really conceived it to be a column on the march, and that there was great reason to believe it was a detachment from Grouchy. All the staff directed their telescopes upon the point indicated; and, as the atmosphere was not very clear, different opinions were entertained: some asserting that what had been taken for troops were trees; others that they were columns in position; whilst several agreed with Soult, that they were troops on the march. In this state of uncertainty and suspense, the Emperor sent for General Domont, and desired him to proceed instantly with a strong reconnoitring party to the right, and procure correct intelligence; to put himself quickly in communication with the troops approaching from St. Lambert; to effect a junction with them, if they belonged to Marshal Grouchy, and to impede their advance if they proved to be enemies. At the same time, the two light cavalry-divisions of Domont and Subervie proceeded some distance in the direction of the wood of Paris, and were then drawn up *en potence* to the right of the French army. 18th of June.

Not long after Domont's departure, Napoleon's impatience to ascertain the precise character of the distant column was relieved by the arrival of an officer of chasseurs with a Prussian hussar, who had just been taken prisoner, and who was the bearer of a letter, addressed by the Prussian Ge-

18th of June. neral Bülow to the Duke of Wellington, to acquaint the latter with his arrival at St. Lambert. The prisoner stated that the column which was perceptible in the vicinity of this village, was the advanced guard of Bülow's corps, which had not been engaged at Ligny; that he had been in the morning at Wavre; that the three other Prussian corps were stationed close to that town, and had passed the previous night there, without perceiving any indication of an enemy in their front; and that a patrole of his own regiment had advanced, during the night, as far as two leagues from Wavre without encountering any body of French troops.

Soult, who had just at that moment written the following letter to Grouchy, in reply to his second report from Gembloux, immediately added a postscript, referring to the above intelligence, and sent off the despatch accompanied by the intercepted communication and the hussar's report.

'Du champ de bataille de Waterloo,
le 18, à une heure après midi.

'Monsieur Le Maréchal,

'Vous avez écrit ce matin, à deux heures, à l'Empereur que vous marcheriez sur Sart-à-Wallain; donc votre projet était de vous porter à Corbaix ou à Wavres: ce mouvement est conforme aux dispositions qui vous out été communiquées; cependant l'Empereur m'ordonne de vous dire que vous devez toujours manœuvrer dans notre direction; c'est à vous à voir le point où nous sommes pour vous régler en conséquence et pour lier nos communications, ainsi que pour être toujours en mesure pour tomber sur quelques troupes ennemies qui chercheraient à inquiéter notre

SOULT

droite, et les écraser. En ce moment la bataille est engagée sur la ligne de Waterloo. Le centre de l'armée anglaise est à Mont-Saint-Jean, ainsi manœuvrez pour joindre notre droite. 18th of June.

'LE DUC DE DALMATIE.'

'P.S.—Une lettre qu'on vient d'intercepter porte que le Général Bulow doit attaquer notre flanc. Nous croyons apercevoir ce corps sur les hauteurs de Saint-Lambert; ainsi ne perdez pas un instant pour vous rapprocher de nous et nous joindre, et pour écraser Bulow que vous prendrez en flagrant délit.'

The above letter is of much historical importance. Although conveying Napoleon's approval of Grouchy's movement upon either Corbaix or Wavre, it clearly indicates the commencement of that anxiety and uneasiness of mind which the Emperor experienced through the fear of even the possibility of a want of just conception on the part of the Marshal, of the true spirit in which the combination of his movements with those of the main army should be carried on. He draws the Marshal's attention to the necessity of his manœuvring so as to prevent the execution of any hostile design against the right flank of the main army, which is then engaged with Wellington's forces, and names Mont-Saint-Jean, the centre of the Duke's position, as a guiding point. This anxiety was naturally augmented very considerably by the discovery of Bülow's troops, and the postscript accordingly enjoins, still more urgently, the necessity of a close and active co-operation.

Very shortly after the officer who was the

18th of June. bearer of this despatch had started, a message was sent in by General Domont, to the effect that his scouts had fallen in with detachments from the enemy in the direction of St. Lambert, and that he had just sent out patroles towards other points to obtain intelligence of Marshal Grouchy, and to communicate with him, if practicable.

It is to be observed, however, that the troops discovered by the French cavalry did not belong to Bülow's main body, but merely to his advanced guard. The former was the mass first seen from La Belle Alliance, when it was moving across the heights of St. Lambert, on the right or opposite bank of the Lasne, but, as explained in a preceding chapter, it encountered great obstruction and much delay during its march towards the field; whilst the latter, awaiting its arrival, rested concealed in the wood of Paris, near Lasne. Thus it appears that both commanders were deceived as to the proximity of any considerable body of Prussians, at this period of the day.* Nevertheless, the conviction of such a proximity, while it imparted increased confidence to Wellington, in regard to the speedy execution of the plan of combined operation which he had preconcerted with Blücher, compelled Napoleon to employ additional vigilance and circumspection upon his right flank. Great, however, as was the necessity for such vigilance,

* See page 382.

the measures that were adopted were lamentably deficient in energy, vigour, and judgment. Considering that the main body of Bülow's corps was on the point of entering the defile of St. Lambert, in which it had to overcome the greatest difficulties, it appears unaccountable that the officer employed in reconnoitring and patroling beyond the extreme right of the French army should not have urged the occupation of the wood of Paris with a detached body of infantry, with a view to impede Bülow's advance, and compel him to take a more circuitous route. In this manner, the Prussian co-operation might have been so far obstructed or delayed as to secure to Napoleon the power of advancing against Wellington with almost the entire of his force, and of thus, perhaps, accomplishing his grand object of defeating both armies in detail. No disposition of this kind was made, but, in place of it, Domont's and Subervie's light cavalry-divisions were moved to the right, *en potence* to the front line, their picquets not extending beyond the plateau in front of the wood of Paris.* Whether this culpable neglect arose from

18th of June.

* It is even doubtful if the whole of this cavalry moved off so early as above stated. In the "Mémoires historiques de Napoléon, Livre ix." it is asserted that Domont was despatched *with* these two divisions when the distant column was first seen; but, according to the observations made by the Prussian advanced parties in front of the wood of Paris, it would appear that the cavalry in question marched off at a later period. It is further asserted by the same authority that shortly afterwards, Lobau was ordered to march with his corps to the support of the light cavalry in the

18th of June.

the want of due penetration and foresight on the part of General Domont, or from this officer having been instructed not to act as if in command of a detached corps, but only to take up a position, within a prescribed distance, *en potence* to the general front line, or, from an over-confident expectation on the part of Napoleon of approaching aid from Grouchy, are points not easily determined; but there can be no doubt, that the error of not occupying the wood of Paris with a strong body of infantry, flanked and supported by the cavalry, was fatal to the development of Napoleon's original design. One infantry-division, combined with Domont's and Subervie's cavalry-divisions, would have sufficed for obstructing the debouching of Bülow's corps from the almost impassable defile of St. Lambert, and compelling it to move by its right, into the line of march of Zieten's corps, which did not reach the field before seven o'clock in the evening. To move by its left, along the deep and miry valley of the Lasne, would have been impracticable so long as the wood of Paris and its vicinity continued to be occupied by the French. In short, the importance of seizing upon the means that presented themselves for materially retarding, if not of completely frus-

vicinity of St. Lambert. This is decidedly incorrect. The advance of Lobau's corps to the right was distinctly observed from the extreme left of the Duke of Wellington's army, and from the Prussian side of the field, at a much later period of the day.

trating, the co-operation of the principal portion of the Prussian forces, was of so vital a nature, that the French Emperor would have been justified in detaching the whole of Lobau's corps, along with the cavalry already mentioned, under an experienced and enterprising General, such as Lobau himself, to operate against the Prussians whilst these were occupied in passing the defiles which led to his right flank. None of those troops were engaged with the Anglo-allied army during any part of the day, so that, without diminishing the numbers actually opposed to the latter, they might have been detached in the manner suggested, instead of remaining, as was the case, drawn up *en potence* on the immediate field of action, to be attacked by the Prussians, who were permitted to pass the defiles without interruption, to collect their forces under cover of the wood of Paris, to debouch from the latter successively and at their leisure, and to organize their movements of attack in perfect security, and with the most systematic order and regularity.

18th of June.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

I.

Declaration, on the 13*th of March,* 1815, *of the Allied Powers, upon the return of Napoleon Buonaparte to France.*

'à Vienne, ce 13 Mars, 1815.

'Les Puissances qui out signé le Traité de Paris, réunies en Congrès à Vienne, informées de l'évasion de Napoléon Buonaparte, et de son entrée à main armée en France, doivent à leur propre dignité et à l'intérêt de l'ordre social une déclaration solemnelle des sentimens que cet événement leur a fait éprouver.

'En rompant ainsi la convention qui l'avait établi à l'isle d'Elbe, Buonaparte détruit le seul titre légal auquel son existence se trouvait attachée. En reparaissant en France, avec des projets de troubles et de bouleversemens, il s'est privé lui-même de la protection des lois, et a manifesté, à la face de l'univers, qu'il ne saurait y avoir ni paix ni trêve avec lui.

'Et quoiqu'intimement persuadés, que la France entière, se ralliant autour de son Souverain légitime, fera incessamment rentre dans le néant cette dernière tentative d'un délire criminel et impuissant, tous les Souverains de l'Europe, animés des mêmes sentimens et guidés par les mêmes principes, déclarent, que si, contre tout calcul, il pouvait résulter de cet événement un danger réel quelconque, ils seraient prêts à donner au Roi de France et à la nation Française, ou à tout autre gouvernement attaqué dès que la demande en serait formée, les secours nécessaires pour rétablir la tranquillité publique, et à faire cause commune contre tous ceux qui entreprendraient de la compromettre.

'Les Puissances déclarent en conséquence que Napoléon Buonaparte s'est placé hors des relations civiles et sociales, et que, comme ennemi et perturbateur du repos du monde, il s'est livré à la vindicte publique.

'Elles déclarent en même tems que, fermement résolues de maintenir intact le Traité de Paris, du 30 Mai, 1814, et les dispositions sanctionnées par ce traité, et celles qu'elles ont arrêtées on qu'elles arrêteront encore pour le completer et le consolider, elles emploieront tous leurs moyens et réuniront tous leurs efforts pour que la paix générale, objet des vœux de l'Europe et but constant de leurs travaux, ne soit pas troublée de nouveau, et pour la garantir de tout attentat qui ménacerait de replonger les peuples dans les désordres et les malheurs des révolutions.

'La présente Déclaration, insérée au Protocole du Congrès réuni à Vienne dans sa séance du 13 Mars, 1815, sera rendue publique.

'Fait et certifié véritable par les Plénipotentiaires des Huit Puissances signataires du Traité de Paris.

'Suivent les signatures dans l'ordre alphabétique des cours.

AUTRICHE	LE PRINCE DE METTERNICH, LE BARON DE WESSENBERG.
ESPAGNE	P. GOMEZ LABRADOR.
FRANCE	LE PRINCE TALLEYRAND, LE DUC DE DALBERG, LATOUR DU PIN, LE COMTE ALEXIS DE NOAILLES.
GRANDE BRETAGNE	WELLINGTON, CATHCART, CLANCARTY, STEWART.
PORTUGAL . . .	LE COMTE DE PALMELLA.
PRUSSE	LE PRINCE DE HARDENBERG, LE BARON DE HUMBOLDT.
RUSSIE	LE COMTE DE RASOUMOWSKY, LE COMTE DE STACKELBERG, LE COMTE DE NESSELRODE.
SUEDE	LÖWENHIELM.

II.

Treaty of Alliance, of the 25th of March, 1815, concluded between Austria, Russia, Prussia, and Great Britain.

'Au nom de la Très Sainte et indivisible Trinité.

'Sa Majesté l'Empereur d'Autriche, Roi de Hongrie et de Bohème, et Sa Majesté le Roi du Royaume Uni de la Grande Bretagne et d'Irlande, ayant pris en considération les suites que l'invasion en France de Napoléon Buonaparte et la situation actuel de ce royaume peuvent avoir pour la sûreté de l'Europe, out resolu d'un commun accord avec Sa Majesté l'Empereur de toutes les Russies, et Sa Majesté le Roi de Prusse, d'appliquer à cette circonstance importante les principes consacrés par le traité de Chaumont. En conséquence ils sont convenus de renouveller par un acte solemnel, signé séparément par chacune des quatre Puissances avec chacune des trois autres, l'engagement de préserver contre toute atteinte l'ordre des choses si heureusement rétabli en Europe, et de déterminer les moyens les plus efficaces de mettre cet engagement à exécution ainsi que de lui donner, dans les circonstances présentes, toute l'extention qu'elles reclament impérieusement.

'A cet effet Sa Majesté l'Empereur d'Autriche, Roi de Hongrie et de Bohème, a nommé pour discuter, conclure, et signer les conditions du présent traité avec Sa Majesté le Roi du Royaume Uni de la Grande Bretagne et d'Irlande le Sieur ; et Sa Majesté Britannique ayant de son côté nomme le Sieur , les dits Plenipotentiaires, après avoir échangé leurs pleinspouvoirs, trouvés en bonne et due forme, out arrêté les articles suivants.

'Article 1.—Les Hautes Puissances Contractantes ci-dessus denommées s'engagent solemnellement à réunir les moyens de leurs états respectifs pour maintenir dans toute leur intégrité les conditions du traité de paix conclu à Paris le 30 Mai, 1814, ainsi que les stipulations arrêtées et signées au Congrès de Vienne, dans

le but de completer les dispositions de ce traité, de les garantir contre toute atteinte, et particulèrement contre les desseins de Napoléon Buonaparte. A cet effet, elles s'engagent à diriger, si le cas l'exigeait, et dans le sens de la déclaration du 13 Mars dernier, de concert et de commun accord, tous leurs efforts contre lui et contre tous ceux qui se seraient déjà ralliés à sa faction, ou s'y réuniraient dans la suite, afin de le forcer à se desister de ses projets et de le mettre hors d'état de troubler à l'avenir la tranquillité et la paix générale, sous la protection de laquelle les droits, la liberté, et l'indépendence des nations venaient d'être placées et assurées.

'ARTICLE 2.—Quoiqu'un but aussi grand et aussi bienfaisant ne permette pas qu'on mesure les moyens destinés pour l'atteindre, et que les Hautes Parties Contractantes soient résolues d'y consacrer tous ceux dont, d'après leur situation respective, elles peuvent disposer, elles sont néanmoins convenues de tenir constamment en campagne, chacun 150,000 hommes au complet, y compris pour le moins la proportion d'un dixième de cavalerie et une juste proportion d'artillerie, sans compter les garnisons, et de les employer activement et de concert contre l'ennemi commun.

'ARTICLE 3.—Les Hautes Parties Contractantes s'engagent réciproquement à ne pas poser les armes que d'un commun accord, et avant que l'objet de la guerre désigné dans l'article 1 du présent traité n'ait été atteint, et tant que Buonaparte ne sera pas mis absolument hors de possibilité d'exciter des troubles et de renouveller ses tentatives pour s'emparer du pouvoir suprême en France.

'ARTICLE 4.—Le présent traité étant principalement applicable aux circonstances présentes, les stipulations du traité de Chaumont, et nommément celles contenues dans l'article 16, auront de nouveau toute leur force et vigueur, aussitôt que le but actuel aura été atteint.

'ARTICLE 5.—Tout ce qui est rélatif au commandement des armées combinées, aux subsistances, &c., sera réglé par une convention particulière.

'ARTICLE 6.—Les Hautes Parties Contractantes auront la faculté d'accréditer respectivement auprès des Généraux Commandants leurs armées des officiers qui auront la liberté de correspondre avec leurs gouvernemens, pour les informer des événemens militaires et de tout ce qui est rélatif aux opérations des armées.

'ARTICLE 7.—Les engagemens stipulés par le présent traité ayant pour but le maintien de la paix générale, les Hautes Parties Contractantes conviennent entr'elles d'inviter toutes les Puissances de l'Europe à y accéder.

'ARTICLE 8.—Le présent traité étant uniquement dirigé dans le but de soutenir la France, ou tout autre pays envahi, contre les entreprises de Buonaparte et de ses adhérens, Sa Majesté Trés Chrétienne sera spécialement invitée à donner son adhésion, et à faire connaître, dans le cas où elle devrait requérir les forces stipulées dans l'article 2, quels secours les circonstances lui permettront d'apporter à l'objêt du présent traité.

'ARTICLE 9.—Le présent traité sera ratifié, et les ratifications en seront échangées dans deux mois, ou plutôt, si faire se peut.

'En foi de quoi les Plénipotentiaires respectifs l'ont signé et y ont apposé le cachet de leurs armes.

'Fait à Vienne, le 25 Mars, de l'an de Grace, 1815.

(L.S.) LE PRINCE DE METTERNICH,
(L.S.) WELLINGTON,
(L.S.) LE BARON DE WESSENBERG.

'Le même jour le même traité a été conclu entre la Russie et la Grande Bretagne; ainsi qu'entre la Prusse et la Grande Bretagne.'

III.

Proclamation of the King of Prussia to his Army.

'When, in the hour of peril, I summoned my people to arms, to combat for the freedom and independence of their country, the whole mass of the youth, glowing with emulation, thronged around my standards, to bear with joyful self-denial unusual hardships, and heroically resolved to brave death itself. Then the best strength of the people intrepidly joined the ranks of my brave soldiers, and my generals led with me into battle a host of heroes, who have shown themselves worthy of the names of their ancestors, and heirs of their glory. Thus we and our allies, attended by victory, conquered the capital of our inveterate foe. Our banners waved in Paris. Napoleon abandoned his authority. Liberty was restored to Germany, security to thrones, and to the world the hope of a durable peace. This hope has now vanished, and we must again march to the combat. A perfidious conspiracy has brought back to France the man who, for ten successive years, inflicted on the world indescribable misery. The people, confounded by his unexpected appearance, have been unable to oppose his armed adherents. Though he, while still at the head of a considerable armed force, declared his abdication to be a voluntary sacrifice to the happiness and repose of France, he now disregards this, like every other convention. He commands a horde of perjured soldiers, who wish to render war eternal.

'Europe is again menaced. It cannot permit the man to remain on the throne of France, who loudly proclaimed universal empire to be the object of his continually renewed wars; who confounded all moral principles by his unceasing breach of faith, and who can therefore give the world no security for his peaceable intentions.

'Again, therefore, arise to the combat. France itself requires

our aid, and all Europe is allied with us. United with your ancient companions in victory, and reinforced by the accession of new brethren in arms, you go, brave Prussians, to a just war, with me, with the princes of my family, and with the generals who have always led you to conquest.

'The justice of the cause which we defend will insure our success. Arise, then, with God for your support, for the repose of the world, for morality, for your King and your country.'

IV.

Address of the Emperor Alexander to a numerous body of Russian troops which he reviewed on the 5th of April, 1815.

'Brave warriors!—the honour and the glory of the great empire with which Providence has intrusted me—your emperor comes once more to place himself at your head! He calls you a second time to the defence of humanity and the rights of Europe, which Napoleon, the vile and criminal artificer of fraud, has dared again to menace. Abusing our clemency, and violating those treaties which insured to him a secure asylum, he has succeeded in frustrating the hopes of those nations who had forgotten his atrocious cruelties and his insatiable ambition. Let us hasten to join the invincible phalanxes of our allies, and deliver France from the scourge of the human race, who once more governs it contrary to the wishes of every reasonable and peaceable inhabitant of that country.

'Soldiers! The sacred league which at present unites all the people of Europe, and which ought to guarantee them from all oppression, we know how to defend, and we will defend it, if necessary, to the last drop of our blood.

'Alexander is among you. You will always see him choose the path of true honour, that which leads to the happiness of mankind. This will entitle him to your confidence and affection.'

V.

The Convocation of the 'Champ de Mai.'

The convocation of the Champ de Mai took place on the 1st of June, and was remarkable for the solemnity with which the compact between the sovereign and the people was affirmed, the splendour with which the ceremony was surrounded, and the grandeur of a spectacle designed alike to appease the desires of the great political parties in the senate, and to resuscitate and keep alive in the minds of the people that thirst for military glory and national supremacy which was again to cement and uphold the power of the ambitious warrior-sovereign of France. It was held in the Champ de Mars, a large open piece of ground extending from the front of the military school nearly to the bank of the Seine, and in which the general assemblies of the nation were convoked together during the early periods of the French monarchy. These assemblies were instituted for the purpose of framing new laws, of adjusting differences among the barons, and of reviewing the national forces; and, as they met in the month of March, the place was called the *Champ de Mars,* until the middle of the eighth century, when Pepin altered the usual period to the month of May, whence arose the more modern appellation of the *Champ de Mai.*

The present convocation was summoned by Napoleon for the acceptance or rejection, by the nation, of a charter, which he had offered to the people, in the shape of "*An additional Act to the Constitutions of the Empire,*" to be determined by the number of votes inscribed by all Frenchmen who had attained to years of maturity, in registries which were opened for that purpose in every town and district. An altar was erected in the centre of the before mentioned arena. The throne was constructed in front of the military school, the back of it adjoining the balcony of this building. Opposite the throne was a semicircular inclo-

sure, affording accommodation to eighteen thousand persons. Along the entablature of the rotunda which encircled the altar were inscribed the names of the eighty-seven departments, intermingled with eagles and tri-coloured garlands. An immense multitude, besides fifty thousand troops, filled the entire space of the Champ de Mars. Napoleon, habited in the imperial costume, took his seat on the throne, surrounded by his brothers, the great officers of his household, the ministers, and the marshals. A number of prelates, headed by M. de Baral, Archbishop of Tours, then advanced towards the steps of the altar, and commenced the divine sacrifice. After the celebration of the mass, the grand-master of the ceremonies conducted to the foot of the throne a deputation of five hundred members of the electoral colleges, who were presented by the arch-chancellor. One of the members, M. Dubois d'Angers (representative of the department of the Maine and Loire) then pronounced the following address, in the name of the French people:—

'Sire! The French people had decreed the crown to you; you deposed it without their consent; its suffrages have just imposed upon you the duty of resuming it. A new contract is formed between the nation and your Majesty. Collected from all points of the empire, around the tables of the law on which we are about to inscribe the wish of the people—this wish, which is the only legitimate source of power—it is impossible for us not to utter the voice of France, of which we are the immediate organs; not to say, in the presence of Europe, to the august chief of the nation, what it expects from him, and what he is to expect from it.

'What is the object of the league of the allied kings, in assuming that warlike preparation by which they alarm Europe, and afflict humanity? By what act, what violation, have we provoked their vengeance, or given cause for their aggression? Have we, since peace was concluded, endeavoured to give them laws? We merely wish to make and to follow those which are

adapted to our habits. We will not have the chief whom our enemies would give us; and we will have him whom they wish us not to have. They dare to proscribe you personally; you, Sire, who, so often master of their capitals, generously consolidated their tottering thrones. This hatred of our enemies adds to our love for you. Were they to proscribe the most obscure of our citizens, it would be our duty to defend him with the same energy. He would be, like you, under the ægis of French law and French power.

'They menace us with invasion! And yet, contracted within frontiers which nature has not imposed upon us, and which, long before your reign, victory and even peace had extended, we have not, from respect to treaties which you had not signed, but which you had offered to observe, sought to pass that narrow boundary.

'Do they ask for guarantees? They have them all in our institutions, and in the will of the French people henceforth united to yours. Do they not dread to remind us of a state of things lately so different, but which may still be reproduced? It would not be the first time that we have conquered all Europe armed against us.

'They dare to dispute with the French nation, for the second time, in the nineteenth century, and in face of the civilized world, those sacred and imprescriptible rights, for which the most insignificant people have never pleaded in vain at the bar of justice and of history.

'Because France wishes to be France, must she be degraded, torn, dismembered; and must the fate of Poland be reserved for us? It is vain to conceal insidious designs under the sole pretence of separating you from us, in order to give us masters with whom we have nothing in common. Their presence destroyed all the illusions attached to their name. They could not believe our oaths, neither could we rely on their promises. Tithes, feudal rights, privileges, every thing that was odious to us, were too evidently the fond objects of their thoughts, when one of them, to console the impatience of the present, assured his con-

fidants, "that he would answer to them for the future." Every thing shall be attempted, every thing executed, to repel so ignominious a yoke. We declare it to nations: may their chiefs hear us! If they accept your offers of peace, the French people will look to your vigorous, liberal, and paternal administration, for grounds of consolation for the sacrifices made to obtain peace; but, if we are left no choice between war and disgrace, the whole country will rise for war. The nation is prepared to relieve you from the too moderate offers you have perhaps made in order to save Europe from a new convulsion. Every Frenchman is a soldier: victory will follow your eagles; and our enemies, who rely on our divisions, will soon regret having provoked us.'

At the conclusion of this address, the result of the votes, and the acceptance of the additional act, were proclaimed, amidst the loud and prolonged acclamations of the spectators.*

Napoleon, then addressing himself to the electors, spoke as follows:—

'Gentlemen, electors of the colleges of the departments and districts;—Gentlemen, deputies of the army and navy, to the Champ de Mai:—

'Emperor, consul, or soldier, I derive all from the people. In prosperity, in adversity, on the field of battle, in council, on the throne, and in exile, France has been the sole and constant object of my thoughts and actions.

'Like the king of Athens, I sacrificed myself for my people, in the hope of realizing the promise given to preserve to France her natural integrity, her honours, and her rights. Indignant

* The number of votes for the acceptance of the additional act amounted to 1,532,557; and, for its rejection, 4,802. Eleven departments had not sent in their registries. A great number of soldiers and sailors, unable to write their signatures, did not vote at all; and the registers of fourteen regiments did not arrive until after the scrutiny.

at seeing those sacred rights, acquired by twenty years of victory, disavowed and lost for ever, and at hearing the cry of "French honour tarnished," the wishes of the nation have replaced me upon that throne which is dear to me because it is the palladium of the independence, the honour, and the rights of the people.

'Frenchmen! in traversing, amidst the public joy, the different provinces of the empire to reach my capital, I had reason to rely on a lasting peace. Nations are bound by treaties concluded by their governments, whatever they may be. My thoughts were then all occupied with the means of establishing our liberty by a constitution conformable to the will and interests of the people. I convoked the Champ de Mai.

'I soon learned that the princes who have disregarded all principle, who have trampled on the sentiments and dearest interests of so many nations, wish to make war against us. They meditate the augmentation of the kingdom of the Netherlands, by giving it as barriers all our northern frontier-places, and the conciliation of the differences which still exist amongst them, by dividing Alsace and Lorraine.

'It was now necessary to provide for war. But, before personally encountering the hazard of battles, my first care has been to constitute the nation without delay. The people have accepted the act which I have presented to them.

'Frenchmen! when we shall have repelled these unjust aggressions, and Europe shall be convinced of what is due to the rights and independence of twenty-eight millions of people, a solemn law, drawn up in the forms required by the constitutional act, shall combine together the different dispositions of our constitutions now dispersed.

'Frenchmen! you are about to return to your departments; inform the citizens that existing circumstances are of the highest importance; that with union, energy, and perseverance, we shall return victorious from this contest between a great people and their oppressors; that future generations will severely scrutinize our conduct; and that a nation has lost all, when she has lost

her independence. Tell them that foreign kings, whom I have raised to the throne, or who owe to me the preservation of their crowns, who all, during my prosperity, sought my alliance and the protection of the French people, now direct their blows against my person. Did I not perceive that it is the country they wish to injure, I would place at their mercy this existence, against which they show themselves so much incensed. But tell the citizens, that while the French people preserve towards me the sentiments of love, of which they have given me so many proofs, the rage of our enemies will be powerless.

'Frenchmen! my wish is that of the people; my rights are theirs; my honour, my glory, my happiness, can be no other than the honour, the glory, and the happiness of France.'

This harangue was received with the most enthusiastic plaudits, and with long continued shouts of "*Vive l'Empereur!*"

At length, when silence was restored, Napoleon swore, upon the New Testament, to observe and cause to be observed the constitutions of the empire, and, immediately, the arch-chancellor, Cambacérès, proclaimed the oath of obedience to the constitutions, and fidelity to the Emperor, on the part of the French people, represented by the electors. Then there arose from the latter, from the troops, and the great majority of the spectators, loud and reiterated cries of "We swear it!" The ministers of war and of marine, at the head of their respective deputations, now advanced and took the oath, as did also the minister of the interior, at the head of the electors, in the name of the national guards of France.

Te Deum having been sung, Napoleon laid aside the imperial mantle, and, rising from the throne, addressed the military as follows:—

'Soldiers of the national guard of the empire! Soldiers of the land and sea forces! To your hands I confide the imperial eagle with the national colours. Swear to defend it at the sacri-

fice of your blood, against the enemies of France and of this throne. Swear that it shall always be your rallying signal.'

Loud and universal cries of "We swear it," immediately resounded among the troops. In the midst of these acclamations, Buonaparte proceeded to another throne in the middle of the Champ de Mars. The troops marched in battalions and squadrons, and surrounded the throne. He then, as colonel of the national and imperial guard, presented to each its eagle, and said:—

'Soldiers of the national guard of Paris! Soldiers of the imperial guard! I confide to you the national eagles, and the national colours. You swear to perish, if necessary, in defending them against the enemies of the country and the throne.'

The whole army, drawn up in close order around him, replied, with repeated exclamations of "We swear it!"

The drum rolled, and silence was restored. "You swear," continued Napoleon, "never to acknowledge any other rallying sign." Again the cries of "We swear it!" resounded on every side. "You, soldiers of the national guard of Paris, swear never to suffer foreigners again to pollute by their presence the capital of the great nation!" The most enthusiastic shouts of "We swear it!" burst from every rank, and were prolonged by the immense multitude who surrounded the inclosure.

The troops were now ordered to defile before Napoleon, and, during two hours, which were occupied in the procession of the numerous battalions, the acclamations were continued with little or no intermission.

VI.

Effective Strength and Composition of the Anglo-allied Army, under the command of Field Marshal the Duke of Wellington.

1st Corps.—His Royal Highness the Prince of Orange.

			Men.
1st Division, M. General Cooke.	1st British Brigade, Major General Maitland.	2nd Batt. 1st. Guards	976
		3rd do. do. do.	1,021
	2nd British Brigade, M. Gen. Sir John Byng.	2nd do. Coldstream Guards ..	1,003
		2nd do. 3rd Guards .. .	1,061
			4,061
	Artillery, Lieut. Colonel Adye.	Capt. Sandham's British Foot-battery.	
		Major Kuhlmann's Horse-battery, K.G. Legion.	
3rd Division, Lieut. Gen. Count Alten.	5th British Brigade, M. Gen. Sir Colin Halkett.	2nd Batt. 30th Regiment	615
		33rd Regiment	561
		2nd Batt. 69th Regiment	516
		2nd do. 73rd do.	562
	2nd Brigade K. G. Legion, Colonel von Ompteda.	1st Light Battalion	423
		2nd do. do.	337
		5th Line do.	379
		8th do. do.	388
	1st Hanoverian Brigade, M. G. Count Kielmansegge.	1st Batt. Bremen	512
		1st do. Verden	533
		1st do. York	607
		1st do. Lüneburg	595
		1st do. Grubenhagen	621
		Field Jäger Corps	321
			6,970
	Artillery, L. Colonel Williamson.	Major Lloyd's British Foot-battery.	
		Captain Cleeves's Foot-battery, K. G. Legion.	
2nd Dutch-Belg. Division, L. General Baron de Perponcher.	1st Brigade, M. Gen. Count de Bylandt.	7th Regiment of the Line ..	701
		27th Jäger Battalion	809
		5th Militia-Battalion	482
		7th do. do.	675
		8th do. do.	566
	2nd Brigade, H. S. H. The Prince Bernhard of Saxe Weimar.	2nd Regiment of Nassau, 3 Battalions	2,709
		Regiment of Orange Nassau, 2 do.	1,591
			7,533
	Artillery, Major van Opstal.	Captain Byleveld's Foot-battery.	
3rd Dutch-Belg. Division. L. Gen. Baron Chasse.	1st Brigade, M. General Ditmers.	2nd Regiment of the Line ..	471
		35th Jäger Battalion	605
		4th Militia-Battalion	519
		6th do. do.	492
		17th do. do.	534
		19th do. do.	467
	2nd Brigade, M. General d'Aubremé.	3rd Regiment of the Line ..	629
		12th do. do.	431
		13th do. do.	664
		36th Jäger Battalion	633
		3rd Militia-Battalion	592
		10th do. do.	632
			6,669
	Artillery, Major van der Smissen.	Captain Krahmer's Horse-battery.	
		Captain Lux's Foot-battery.	
		Total 1st corps ..	25,233 men, and 48 guns.

2ND CORPS.—LIEUT. GENERAL LORD HILL.

			Men.	
2nd Division, L. Gen. Sir H. Clinton.	3rd British Brigade, Major General Adam.	1st Batt. 52nd Regiment	1,038	
		1st do. 71st do.	810	
		2nd do. 95th do.	585	
		3rd do. 95th do.	188	
	1st Brigade K. G. Legion, Colonel du Plat.	1st Line Battalion	411	
		2nd do. do.	437	
		3rd do. do.	494	
		4th do. do.	416	
	3rd Hanoverian Brigade, Colonel Halkett.	Landwehr Batt. Bremervörde ..	632	
		Do. do. Osnabrück ..	612	
		Do. do. Quackenbrück ..	588	
		Do. do. Salzgitter ..	622	
				6,833
	Artillery, Lieut. Colonel Gold.	Captain Bolton's British Foot-battery		
		Major Sympher's Horse-battery, K.G. Legion		
4th Division, L. Gen. Sir Charles Colville.	4th British Brigade, Colonel Mitchell.	3rd Batt. 14th Regiment	571	
		1st do. 23rd do.	647	
		51st Regiment	549	
	6th British Brigade, M. General Johnstone.	2nd Batt. 35th Regiment	570	
		1st do. 54th do.	541	
		2nd do. 59th do.	461	
		1st do. 91st do.	824	
	6th Hanoverian Brigade, M. Gen. Sir James Lyon.	Landwehr Batt. Hoya	629	
		Do. do. Nienburg ..	625	
		Do. do. Lauenburg ..	553	
		Do. do. Bentheim ..	608	
		Do. do. Calenberg ..	634	
				7,212
	Artillery, L. Colonel Hawker.	Major Brome's British Foot-battery		
		Captain von Rettberg's Hanoverian Foot-battery		
1st Dutch-Belg. Division, L. General Stedmann.	1st Brigade, M. General Hauw.	4th Regiment of the Line ..		6,389
		6th do. do. ..		
		16th Jäger Battalion		
		9th Militia do.		
		14th do. do.		
		15th do. do.		
	2nd Brigade, M. General Eerens.	1st Regiment of the Line ..		
		18th Jäger Battalion ..		
		1st Militia do.		
		2nd do. do.		
		18th do. do.		
	Artillery	1 Foot-battery		
Dutch-Belgian Indian Brigade, Lieut. General Anthing.		5th Regiment, 2 Battalions ..		3,583
		Flankers		
		10th Jäger Battalion ..		
		11th do. do.		
		Artillery—1 Foot-battery ..		
Detachments from 6th and 7th Line Battalions of the K. G. Legion, distributed among the other Battalions, and 2 Orderlies from Foreign Battalions ..				16
Total 2nd corps ..				24,033 men, and 40 guns.

RESERVE.

			Men.
5th Division, L. Gen. Sir Thomas Picton.	8th British Brigade, M. Gen. Sir James Kempt.	1st Batt. 28th Regiment	557
		1st do. 32nd do.	662
		1st do. 79th do.	703
		1st do. 95th do.	549
	9th British Brigade, M. Gen. Sir Denis Pack.	3rd do. 1st do.	604
		1st do. 42nd do.	526
		2nd do. 44th do.	455
		1st do. 92nd do.	588
	5th Hanoverian Brigade, Colonel von Vincke.	Landwehr Battalion Hameln	669
		Do. do. Gifhorn	617
		Do. do. Hildesheim	617
		Do. do. Peine	611
			7,158
	Artillery, Major Heisse.	Major Rogers's British Foot-battery	
		Captain Braun's Hanoverian Foot-battery	
6th Division, L. Gen. Hon. Sir L. Cole.	10th British Brigade, M. Gen. Sir John Lambert,	1st Batt. 4th Regiment	669
		1st do. 27th do.	698
		1st do. 40th do.	761
		2nd do. 81st do.	439
	4th Hanoverian Brigade, Colonel Best.	Landwehr Batt. Verden	621
		Do. do. Lüneburg	624
		Do. do. Osterode	677
		Do. do. Münden	660
			5,149
	Artillery, L. Colonel Bruckmann.	Major Unett's British Foot-battery	
		Captain Sinclair's do. do.	
	British Reserve-Artillery, Major Drummond.	L. Col. Sir Hew Ross's Horse-battery	
		Major Beane's do.	
		Major Morisson's Foot-battery	
		Captain Hutchesson's do.	
		Captain Ilbert's do.	
7th Division	7th British brigade.	2nd Batt. 25th Regiment	388
		2nd do. 37th do.	491
		2nd do. 78th do.	337
	British Garrison Troops.	13th Veteran Battalion	683
		1st Foreign do.	595
		2nd Garrison do.	739
			3,233
Brunswick Corps, H. S. H. The Duke of Brunswick.	Major von Ranschenplatt	Advanced-Guard Battalion	672
	Light Brigade, L. Colonel von Buttlar.	Guard Battalion	672
		1st Light Battalion	672
		2nd do. do.	672
		3rd do. do.	672
	Line Brigade, L. Colonel von Specht.	1st Line do.	672
		2nd do. do.	672
		3rd do. do.	672
			5,376
	Artillery, Major Mahn.	Captain von Heinemann's Horse-battery	
		Major Moll's Foot-battery	
Hanoverian Reserve-Corps, L. Gen. von der Decken.	1st Brigade, L. Colonel von Bennigsen.	Field Battalion Hoya	9,000
		Landwehr Battalion Mölln	
		Landwehr Battalion Bremerlehe	
	2nd Brigade, L. Colonel von Beaulieu.	Do. do. Nordheim	
		Do. do. Ahlefeldt	
		Do. do. Springe	
	3rd Brigade, L. Colonel von Bodecken.	Landwehr Battalion Ottendorf	
		Do. do. Zelle	
		Do. do. Ratzeburg	
	4th Brigade, L. Colonel von Wissel.	Landwehr Battalion Hannover	
		Do. do. Uelzen	
		Do. do. Neustadt	
		Do. do. Diepholz	
Nassau Contingent, General von Kruse.		1st Regiment—3 Battalions	2,880
		Total Reserve	32,796 men, and 64 guns.

CAVALRY.

			Men.
British, and King's German Legion.	1st Brigade, M. Gen. Lord E. Somerset.	1st Life Guards	228
		2nd do. do.	231
		Royal Horse Guards (Blue)	237
		1st Dragoon Guards	530
	2nd Brigade, M. Gen. Sir W. Ponsonby.	1st, or Royal, Dragoons	394
		2nd Dragoons (Scots Greys)	391
		6th (or Inniskilling) Dragoons	396
	3rd Brigade, M. Gen. Sir W. Dörnberg.	1st Light Dragoons, K. G. Legion	462
		2nd do. do. do.	419
		23rd Light Dragoons	387
	4th Brigade, M. Gen. Sir J. Vandeleur.	11th do. do.	390
		12th do. do.	388
		16th do. do.	393
	5th Brigade, M. Gen. Sir Colq. Grant.	2nd Hussars, K. G. Legion	564
		7th do.	380
		15th do.	392
	6th Brigade, M. Gen. Sir H. Vivian.	1st do. K. G. Legion	493
		10th do.	390
		18th do.	396
	7th Brigade, Col. Sir F. von Arentsschildt.	3rd do. K. G. Legion	622
		13th Light Dragoons	390
	British Horse-batteries attached to the Cavalry.	1. Major Bull's (Howitzers).	
		2. Lieut. Colonel Webber Smith's.	
		3. Lieut. Colonel Sir Robert Gardiner's.	
		4. Captain Whinyates's (with Rockets).	
		5. Captain Mercer's.	
		6. Captain Ramsay's.	
Hanoverian.	1st Brigade, Colonel von Estorff.	Prince Regent's Hussars	596
		Bremen and Verden Hussars	589
		Cumberland Hussars	497
	Brunswick Cavalry.	Regiment of Hussars	690
		Squadron of Uhlans	232
Dutch-Belgian.	1st Brigade, M. General Trip.	1st Dutch Carabiniers	446
		2nd Belgian do.	399
		3rd Dutch do.	392
	2nd Brigade, M. General de Ghigny.	4th Dutch Light Dragoons	647
		8th Belgian Hussars	439
	3rd Brigade, M. General van Merlen.	5th do. Light Dragoons	441
		6th Dutch Hussars	641
	Artillery	Captain Gey's Horse-battery.	
			14,482 men, and 44 guns.

ARTILLERY.

		Guns.	Men.
British.	7 Foot-batteries of 6 guns each	42	3,630
	3 do. do. 4 do. (18-prs.)	12	
	8 Horse do. do. 6 do.	48	1,400
King's German Legion.	1 Foot do. do. 6 do.	6	526
	2 Horse do. do. 6 do. each	12	
Hanoverian.	2 Foot do. do. 6 do. do.	12	465
Brunswick.	1 Foot do. do. 8 do. do.	8	510
	1 Horse do. do. 8 do. do.	8	
Dutch-Belgian.	4 Foot do. do. 8 do. do.	32	968
	2 Horse do. do. 8 do. do.	16	667
		196	8,166
Engineers, Sappers and Miners, Waggon-Train, and Staff Corps			1,240

TOTAL STRENGTH.

Infantry	82,062
Cavalry	14,482
Artillery	8,166
Engineers, Waggon-Train, &c.	1,240
Grand Total	105,950 men, and 196 guns.

VII.

Orders for the defence of the Towns of Antwerp, Ostend, Nieuport, Ypres, Tournai, Ath, Mons, and Ghent.

'1. Le moment que l'ennemi mettra le pied sur le territoire des Pays Bas les places ci-dessous nommées doivent étre déclarées en état de siége : c'est-a-dire, Anvers, Ostende, Nieuport, Ypres, Tournay, Ath, Mons, et Gand.

'2. Aussitôt qu'une place est déclarée en etat de siège, soit par l'effet de cet ordre, ou par un ordre particulièrement adressé au Gouverneur ou Commandant, toutes les précautions militaires doivent être adoptées ; et le Gouverneur doit tout de suite rassembler le conseil de défense.

'3. Le conseil de défense doit consister du Gouverneur comme Président, du Commandant des troupes, du Chef de l'Artillerie, et du Chef de Génie.

'4. Il sera tenu un registre de leurs déliberations, qui sera signé par tous les membres du conseil.

'5. Le Gouverneur décidera seul sur toute question, ou de la défense ou de la police militaire ou autre, après avoir pris l'avis et entendu les discussions de son conseil, même contre leur avis ; et chaque membre est autorisé de mettre sur le registre son opinion, signée par lui-même, avec tout le développement qu'il voudra.

'6. Les membres du conseil ne peuvent laisser transpirer aucun objet de déliberation, ou leur opinion personnelle sur la situation de la place qu'ils occupent, sans y être appellés par l'autorité supérieure.

'7. Le Gouverneur d'une des places ci-dessous nommées, c'est-à-dire, Anvers, Ostende, Nieuport, Ypres, la citadelle de Tournay, Ath, la citadelle de Gand, qui, après avoir été en état de siège, aura consenti à la reddition de sa place avant que l'ennemi y ait fait brèche praticable, et que cette brèche ait été

retranchée, et qu'elle ait soutenu un assaut, et sans avoir pris l'avis, ou contre l'aveu, de son conseil, sera coupable, non seulement d'une désobéissance militaire, mais de trahison.

'8. Il y aura ordre particulier pour la défense des villes de Mons, de Tournay, et de Gand, au lieu de l'Article 7.

'WELLINGTON.'

Orders for the defence of the Town of Tournay.

'La ville de Tournay doit être considérée comme un camp retranché, dont la citadelle est le réduit.

'La citadelle doit tonjours contenir le tiers des troupes stationées à Tournay; et doit être défendue comme forteresse jusqu' à l'extrémité.

'Les flèches en avant des portes de la ville, les fossés, et les inondations de l'Escaut, qui pourraient se pratiquer, donneront la facilité aux troupes dans la ville de la défendre jusqu' à ce que l'ennemi en aurait détruit les défenses.

'Les troupes dans la ville doivent alors se retirer dans la citadelle jusqu' à la concurrence de ; et le surplus sur Bruxelles, ou le long de l'Escaut sur Audenarde, ou selon les ordres que le Gouverneur aura reçu.

'WELLINGTON.'

Orders for the defence of the Town of Mons.

'Le Gouverneur de Mons doit considérer la place comme un camp retranché, da défense de laquelle est facilitée par les ouvrages dernièrement construits, par les bons fossés de la ville, et par les inondations.

'Pour conserver ces dernières il faut occuper la redoute sur la route de St. Ghislain, avec 200 hommes; et celle sur Mont Palizel avec 400.

'Aussitôt que la place soit déclarée en état de siège il faut faire des coupures dans les chaussées qui l'approchent, et faire des abattis assez importans pour arrêter l'ennemi sous le feu des batteries.

'L'ennemi ne saurait faire une attaque sérieuse sur la place avant de saigner les inondations, après avoir pris les redoutes qui en gardent les écluses.

'Un Gouverneur Président observera ses mouvemens, et prendra les mesures pour assurer sa retraite, quand elle deviendrait nécessaire par les approches de l'ennemi, en faisant barricader les rues, &c.; et il se retirera soit sur Ath soit sur Bruxelles, selon les circonstances ou les ordres qu'il aura reçu, prenant garde de renforcer la garnison du Mont Palazel jusqu' à la concurrence de 600 hommes.

'WELLINGTON.'

Orders for the defence of the Town of Ghent.

'L'enceinte de Gand est énorme, et l'on ne peut considérer cette ville que comme un camp retranché, dont la citadelle est le réduit.

'Mais, malgré la grandeur de l'enceinte, quoique nuisible à une défense en règle avec une petite force; et comme les inondations aident beaucoup à la défense et rendent l'attaque sur tous les points très difficile, il y a lieu d'espérer que le Gouverneur pourrait même tenir la ville.

'1. Le tiers de la garnison doit toujours se trouver dans la citadelle.

'2. Ce tiers doit s'augmenter jusqu' à la concurrence de 1400 hommes, en cas que la citadelle soit la partie attaquée, ou que le Gouverneur se trouve dans le cas de se retirer de la ville.

'3. Si la ville est attaquée par la porte de Courtrai ou par la porte de Bruges, tous les efforts doivent être faits pour tenir les redoutes entre l'Escaut et le Lys en avant de la première, et les moulins et le village en avant de la seconde.

'4. Si le Gouverneur de la ville se trouve dans le cas de se retirer avec ses troupes après avoir laissé garnison suffisante dans la citadelle, il doit se retirer sur Anvers à moins d'avoir autres ordres de ses supérieurs.

'WELLINGTON.'

VIII.

Effective Strength and Composition of the Prussian Army, under the command of Field Marshal Prince Blücher von Wahlstadt.

1st Corps d'armée—Lieut. General von Zieten.

		Batts.	Men.
1st Brigade, General von Steinmetz.	12th and 24th Regiments of the Line	9½	8,647
	1st Westphalian Landwehr Regiment		
	1st and 3rd Silesian Rifle Companies		
2nd Brigade, General von Pirch II.	6th and 28th Regiments of the Line	9	7,666
	2nd Westphalian Landwehr Regiment		
3rd Brigade, General von Jagow.	7th and 29th Regiments of the Line	9½	6,853
	3rd Westphalian Landwehr Regiment		
	2nd and 4th Silesian Rifle Companies ..		
4th Brigade, General Count Henkel.	19th Regiment of the Line	6	4,721
	4th Westphalian Landwehr Regiment ..		
			27,887

Reserve-Cavalry of the 1st Corps—Lieut. General von Röder.

		Squad.		
Brigade of General von Treskow.	Brandenburg Dragoons (No. 5)	4	..	1,925
	1st West Prussian Dragoons (No. 2) ..	4		
	Brandenburg Uhlans	4		
Brigade of L. Colonel von Lützow.	6th Uhlans	4		
	1st and 2nd Kurmark Landwehr Regiments ..	8		
	1st Silesian Hussars	4		
	1st Westphalian Landwehr Regiment ..	4		

Reserve-Artillery of the 1st Corps—Colonel von Lehmann.

12-pounder Foot-batteries Nos. 2, 6, and 9 ..	..	..	1,019
6- do. do. do. Nos. 1, 3, 7, 8, and 15			
Howitzer-battery No. 1			
Horse-batteries Nos. 2, 7, and 10			
Total—34 Battalions, 32 Squadrons, 12 Batteries ..	..	..	30,831 men, and 96 guns.

2nd Corps d'armée—General von Pirch I.

		Batts.	Men.
5th Brigade, General von Tippelskirchen.	2nd and 25th Regiments of the Line	9	6,851
	5th Westphalian Landwehr Regiment ..		
6th Brigade, General von Krafft.	9th and 26th Regiments of the Line	9	6,469
	1st Elbe Landwehr Regiment		
7th Brigade, General von Brause.	14th and 22nd Regiments of the Line ..	9	6,224
	2nd Elbe Landwehr Regiment		
8th Brigade, Colonel von Langen.	21st and 23rd Regiments of the Line ..	9	6,292
	3rd Elbe Landwehr Regiment		
			25,836

Reserve-Cavalry of the 2nd Corps—General von Jürgass.

		Squad.		
Brigade of Colonel von Thümen.	Silesian Uhlans	4	..	4,468
	6th Neumark Dragoons	4		
	11th Hussars	4		
Brigade of Col. Count Schulenburg.	1st Queen's Dragoons	4		
	4th Kurmark Landwehr regiment	4		
Brigade of L. Colonel von Sohr.	3rd Brandenburg Hussars	4		
	5th Pomeranian Hussars	4		
	5th Kurmark Landwehr Regiment	4		
	Elbe Landwehr Regiment	4		

Reserve-Artillery of the 2nd Corps—Colonel von Röhl.

12-pounder Foot-batteries Nos. 4 and 8 ..	..	..	1,454
6-pounder do. do. Nos. 5, 10, 12, 34, & 37			
Horse-batteries Nos. 5, 6, and 14			
Total—36 Battalions, 36 Squadrons, 10 Batteries ..			31,758 men, and 80 guns.

3rd Corps d'armée—Lieut. General von Thielemann.

		Batts.	Men.
9th Brigade, General von Borcke.	8th and 36th Regiments of the Line .. .. 1st Kurmark Landwehr Regiment	9 ..	6,752
10th Brigade, Colonel von Kämpfen.	27th Regiment of the Line .. .. .. 2nd Kurmark Landwehr Regiment	6 ..	4,045
11th Brigade, Colonel von Luck.	3rd and 4th Kurmark Landwehr Regiments ..	6 ..	3,634
12th Brigade, Colonel von Stulpnagel.	31st Regiment of the Line .. .. .. 5th and 6th Kurmark Landwehr Regiments ..	9 ..	6,180
			20,611

Reserve-Cavalry of the 3rd Corps—General von Hobe.

		Squad.		
Brigade of Colonel von der Marwitz.	7th Uhlans	3		
	8th do.	4		
	9th Hussars	3		
Brigade of Colonel Count Lottum.	5th Uhlans	3	.. ..	2,405
	7th Dragoons	5		
	3rd Kurmark Landwehr Regiment .. .	4		
	6th do. do. do.	4		

Reserve-Artillery of the 3rd Corps—Colonel von Mohnhaupt.

12-pounder Foot-battery No. 7	.. ..	964
6-pounder do. do. Nos. 18 and 35 ..		
Horse-batteries Nos. 18, 19, and 20		
Total—30 Battalions, 24 Squadrons, 6 Batteries	.. ..	23,980 men, and 48 guns.

4th Corps d'armée—General Count Bülow von Dennewitz.

		Batts.	Men.
13th Brigade. L. General von Hacke.	10th Regiment of the Line .. .. 2nd and 3rd Neumark Landwehr Regiments ..	9 ..	6,385
14th Brigade, General von Ryssel.	11th Regiment of the Line .. .. 1st and 2nd Pomeranian Landwehr Regiments	9 ..	6,953
15th Brigade, General von Losthin.	18th Regiment of the Line .. .. 3rd and 4th Silesian Landwehr Regiments ..	9 ..	5,881
16th Brigade, Colonel von Hiller.	15th Regiment of the Line .. .. .. 1st and 2nd Silesian Landwehr Regiments ..	9 ..	6,162
			25,381

Reserve-Cavalry of the 4th Corps—General, Prince William of Prussia.

		Squad.		
Brigade of General von Sydow.	1st West Prussian Uhlans	4		
	2nd Silesian Hussars	4		
	8th Hussars	3		
Brigade of Colonel Count Schwerin.	10th do.	4	.. ..	3,081
	1st and 2nd Neumark Landwehr Regiments ..	8		
	1st and 2nd Pomeranian Landwehr Regiments	8		
Brigade of L. Colonel von Wabzdorf.	1st, 2nd, and 3rd Silesian Landwehr Regiments	12		

Reserve-Artillery of the 4th Corps—Lieut. Colonel von Bardeleben.

12-pounder Foot-batteries Nos. 3, 5, and 13		
6 do. do. do. Nos. 2, 11, 13, 14, & 21	.. ..	1,866
Horse-batteries Nos. 1, 11, and 12		
Total—36 Battalions, 43 Squadrons, 11 Batteries	.. ..	30,328 men, and 88 guns.

Total Strength.

	Infantry.	Cavalry.	Artillery.	Guns.
1st Corps d'armée ..	27,817 ..	1,925 ..	1,019 ..	96
2nd do. do. ..	25,836 ..	4,468 ..	1,454 ..	80
3rd do. do. ..	20,611 ..	2,405 ..	964 ..	48
4th do. do. ..	25,381 ..	3,081 ..	1,866 ..	88
	99,715 ..	11,879 ..	5,303 ..	312

Grand Total 116,897 men and 312 guns.

IX.

Effective Strength and Composition of the French Army, under the command of Napoleon Buonaparte.

Imperial Guard—Marshal Mortier.

		Batts.	Men.
Old Guard — 1st Division, Lieut. General Friant.	1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Regiments of Grenadiers ..	8 ..	4,000
Old Guard — 2nd Division, Lieut. Gen. Morand.	1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Regiments of Chasseurs ..	8 ..	4,000
Young Guard, Lieut. Gen. Duhesme.	1st and 2nd Regiments of Voltigeurs	4 ..	2,000
	1st and 2nd Regiments of Tirailleurs	4 ..	2,000
		Squad.	
1st Cavalry Division, General Guyot.	Grenadiers à Cheval	13 ..	2,000
	Dragoons		
2nd Cavalry Division, General Lef. Desnouettes.	Chasseurs	19 ..	2,000
	Lancers		
Artillery, General Devaux.	9 Foot-batteries	.. ..	2,400
	4 Horse do.		
Total—24 Battalions, 32 Squadrons, 13 Batteries ..		..	18,400 men, and 96 guns.

1st Corps d'armée—Lieut. General Count d'Erlon.

		Batt.	
1st Division, General Alix.	54th, 55th, 28th, and 105th Regiments of the Line	8	.. 17,600
2nd Division, General Donzelot.	13th (Light), 17th, 19th, and 51st Regiments of the Line	8	
3rd Division, General Marcognet.	21st, 46th, 25th, and 45th Regiments of the Line	8	
4th Division, General Durutte.	8th, 29th, 85th, and 95th Regiments of the Line	8	
		Squad.	
1st Cavaly Division, Lieut. General Jaquinot.	3rd and 7th Chasseurs	6	.. 1,400
	3rd and 4th Lancers	5	
Artillery.	5 Foot-batteries	..	1,564
	1 Horse-battery		
Total—32 Battalions, 11 Squadrons, 6 Batteries, ..		..	20,564 men, and 46 guns.

2nd Corps d'armée—Lieut. General Count Reille.

		Batt.	
5th Division, General Bachelu.	11th, 61st, 72nd, and 108th Regiments of the Line	9	.. 19,435
6th Division, Prince Jerome Napoleon.	1st and 2nd (Light), 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Regiments of the Line	13	
7th Division, General Girard.	3rd, 4th, and 82nd Regiments of the Line, and 12th Light Infantry	8	
9th Division, General Foy.	4th (Light), 92nd, 93rd, and 100th Regiments of the Line	10	
		Squad.	
2nd Cavalry-Division, Lieut. General Piré.	1st and 6th Chasseurs	8	.. 1,865
	5th and 6th Lancers	7	
Artillery.	5 Foot-batteries	..	1,861
	1 Horse-battery		
Total—29 Battalions, 15 Squadrons, 6 Batteries ..		..	23,161 men, and 46 guns.

3rd Corps d'armée—Lieut. General Count Vandamme.

		Batt.	
10th Division, General Hubert.	34th, 88th, 22nd, and 70th Regiments of the Line	12	.. 13,200
11th Division, General Berthezène.	12th, 56th, 33nd, and 86th Regiments of the Line	8	
8th Division, General Lefol.	15th (Light), 23rd, 37th, and 64th Regiments of the Line	11	
		Squad.	
3rd Cavalry-Division, Lieut. General Domont.	4th and 9th Chasseurs	5	.. 1,400
	12th Chasseurs	4	
Artillery.	4 Foot-batteries	..	1,292
	1 Horse-battery		
Total—31 Battalions, 9 Squadrons, 5 Batteries		..	15,892 men, and 38 guns.

4th Corps d'Armée—Lieut. General Count Gérard.

		Batt.	Men.
12th Division, Lieut. General Pecheux.	30th, 96th, and 63rd Regiments of the Line ..	6	
13th Division, Lieut. General Vichery.	59th, 76th, 48th, and 69th Regiments of the Line	8	.. 12,100
14th Division, General Hulot.	9th, 111th, 44th, and 50th Regiments of the Line	8	
		Squad.	
6th Cavalry-Division, Lieutenant General Morin.	6th Hussars	3	
	8th Chasseurs	3	.. 1,400
	6th and 16th Dragoons	6	
Artillery.	4 Foot-batteries		.. 1,292
	1 Horse-battery		
Total—22 Battalions, 12 Squadrons, 5 Batteries			.. 14,792 men, and 38 guns.

6th Corps d'Armée—Lieut. General Count Lobau.

		Batt.	
19th Division, Lieut. General Simmer.	5th, 11th, 27th, and 84th Regiments of the Line	8	
20th Division, Lieut. General Jeannin.	5th (Light), 16th, 47th, and 107th Regiments of the Line	8	.. 9,900
21st Division, Lieut. General Teste.	8th (Light), 40th, 65th, and 75th Regiments of the Line	8	
Artillery.	4 Foot-batteries		.. 1,292
	1 Horse-battery		
Total—24 Battalions, 5 Batteries			.. 11,192 men, and 38 guns.

Reserve Cavalry—Marshal Grouchy.

1st Corps—Lieut. General Pajol.

		Squad.	
4th Cavalry-Division, Lieut. General Soult.	1st, 4th, and 5th Hussars	9	
5th Cavalry-Division, Lieut. General Subervie.	1st and 2nd Lancers	6	.. 2,500
	11th Chasseurs	3	
Artillery.	2 Horse-batteries		.. 300

2nd Corps—Lieut. General Excelmans.

		Squad.	
9th Cavalry-Division, Lieutenant General Strolz.	5th, 13th, 15th, and 20th Dragoons	12	
10th Cavalry-Division, Lieutenant General Chastel.	4th, 12th, 14th, and 17th Dragoons	12	.. 2,500
Artillery.	2 Horse-batteries		.. 300

3rd Corps—Lieut. General Kellermann (Count de Valmy.)

		Squad.	
11th Cavalry-Division, Lieut. General L'Heritier.	2nd and 7th Dragoons	7	
	8th and 11th Cuirassiers	5	.. 3,300
12th Cavalry-Division, Lieut. General Roussel.	1st and 2nd Carabiniers	6	
	2nd and 3rd Cuirassiers	6	
Artillery.	2 Horse-batteries		.. 300

4th Corps—Lieut. General Count Milhaut.

		Squad.	
13th Cavalry-Division, Lieut. General Wathier.	1st, 4th, 7th, and 12th Cuirassiers	12	
14th Cavalry-Division, Lieut. General Delort.	5th, 6th, 9th, and 10th Cuirassiers	9	.. 3,300
Artillery.	2 Horse-batteries		.. 300
Total—87 Squadrons, 8 Batteries			.. 12,800 men, and 48 guns.

TOTAL STRENGTH.

	Infantry.	Cavalry.	Artillery.	Guns.	
Imperial Guard	12,000 ..	4,000 ..	2,400 ..	96	
1st Corps d'Armée	17,600 ..	1,400 ..	1,564 ..	46	
2nd do. do.	19,435 ..	1,865 ..	1,861 ..	46	
3rd do. do.	13,200 ..	1,400 ..	1,292 ..	38	
4th do. do.	12,100 ..	1,400 ..	1,292 ..	38	
6th do. do.	9,900 ..	— ..	1,292 ..	38	
4 Corps of Reserve-Cavalry ..	— ..	11,600 ..	1,200 ..	48	
Waggon Train, Engineers, &c. ..	— ..	— ..	— ..	—	5,600
Total, ...	84,235 ..	21,665 ..	10,901 ..	350	5,600

Grand Total—122,401 men, and 350 guns.

X.

Strength of the French Army, according to information received at the Prussian Head-quarters, shortly before the commencement of hostilities.

	Men.
1st Corps, under d'Erlon, at Lille	22,000
2nd do. do. Reille, at Valenciennes . . .	24,000
3rd do. do. Vandamme, at Mezières . . .	18,000
4th do. do. Gérard, at Thionville . . .	16,000
6th do. do. Lobau, at Laon	14,000
Imperial Guard, do. Mortier, in Paris	21,000
The 4 corps of reserve-cavalry	15,000
	130,000 men.

XI.

'ORDRE DU JOUR.

'Avesne, le 13 Juin, 1815.

'*Position de l'armée le* 14.

'Le grand quartier général á Beaumont. L'infanterie de la garde impériale sera bivaquée à un quart de lieue en avant de Beaumont, et formera trois lignes; la jeune garde, les chasseurs, et les grenadiers. M. le duc de Trévise reconnaîtra l'emplacement de ce camp: il aura soin que tout soit à sa place; artillerie, ambulance, équipage, etc.

'Le premier régiment de grenadiers à pied se rendra à Beaumont.

'La cavalerie de la garde impériale sera placée en arrière de Beaumont; mais les corps les plus éloignés n'en doivent pas être à une lieue.

'Le deuxième corps prendra position à Laire, c'est-à-dire, le plus près possible de la frontière, sans la dépasser. Les quatre divisions de ce corps d'armée seront réunies et bivaqueront sur deux ou quatre lignes; le quartier général au milieu; la cavalerie en avant, éclairant tous les débouchés, mais aussi sans dépasser la frontière, et la faisant respecter par les partisans ennemis qui voudraient la violer.

'Les bivouacs seront placés de manière que les feux ne puissent être aperçus de l'ennemi: les généraux empêcheront que personne ne s'écarte du camp: ils s'assureront que la troupe est pourvue de cinquante cartouches par homme, quatre jours de pain, et une demi-livre de riz; que l'artillerie et les ambulances sont en bon état, et les feront placer à leur ordre de bataille. Ainsi le deuxième corps sera disposé à se mettre en marche le 15 à trois heures du matin, si l'ordre en est donné, pour se porter sur Charleroi, et y arriver avant neuf heures.

'Le premier corps prendra position à Solre-sur-Sambre, et il bivaquera aussi sur plusieurs lignes, observant, ainsi que le deuxième corps, que ses feux ne puissent être aperçus de l'ennemi; que personne ne s'écarte du camp, et que les généraux s'assurent de l'état des munitions, des vivres de la troupe, et que l'artillerie et les ambulances soient placées à leur ordre de bataille.

'Le premier corps se tiendra également prêt à partir le 15, à trois heures du matin, pour suivre le mouvement du deuxième corps; de manière que, dans la journée d'après-demain, ces deux corps manœuvrent dans la même direction, et se protégent.

'Le troisième corps prendra demain position à une lieue en avant de Beaumont, le plus près possible de la frontière, sans cependant la dépasser, ni souffrir qu'elle soit violée par aucun parti ennemi. Le général Vandamme tiendra tout le monde à son poste, recommandera que les feux soient cachés, et qu'ils ne puissent être aperçus de l'ennemi. Il se conformera d'ailleurs à ce qui est prescrit au deuxième corps pour les munitions, les vivres, l'artillerie, et les ambulances, et pour être prêt à se mettre en mouvement le 15 à trois heures du matin.

'Le sixème corps se portera en avant de Beaumont; et sera bivaqué sur deux lignes, à un quart de lieue du troisième corps. M. le comte le Lobau choisira l'emplacement, et il fera observer les dispositions générales qui sont prescrites par le présent ordre.

'M. le maréchal Grouchy portera les premier, deuxième, troisième, et quatrième corps de cavalerie, en avant de Beaumont, et les établira au bivouac entre cette ville et Walcourt, faisant également respecter la frontière, empêchant que personne ne la dèpasse, et qu'on se laisse voir, ni que les feux puissent être aperçus de l'ennemi; et il se tiendra prêt à partir après demain, à trois heures du matin, s'il en reçoit l'ordre, pour se porter sur Charleroi, et faire l'avant-garde de l'armée.

'Il recommandera aux généraux de s'assurer si tous les cavaliers sont pourvus de cartouches, si leurs armes sont en bon état, et s'ils ont pour quatre jours de pain, et la demi-livre de riz qui ont été ordonnés.

'L'équipage de ponts sera bivaqué derrière le sixième corps, et en avant de l'infanterie de la garde impériale.

'Le parc central d'artillerie sera en arrière de Beaumont.

'L'armée de la Moselle prendra demain position en avant de Philippeville. M. le comte Gérard la disposera de manière a pouvoir partir après demain, le 15, à trois heures du matin, pour joindre le troisième corps, et appuyer son mouvement sur Charleroi, suivant le nouvel ordre qui lui sera donné; mais le général Gérard aura soin de se bien garder sur son flanc droit, et en avant de lui, sur toutes les directions de Charleroi et de Namur. Si l'armée de la Moselle a des pontons à sa suite, le général Gérard les fera avancer le plus près possible, afin de pouvoir en disposer.

'Tous les corps d'armée feront marcher en tête les sapeurs, et les moyens de passage que les généraux auront réunis.

'Les sapeurs de la garde impériale, les ouvriers de la marine, et les sapeurs de la réserve, marcheront après le sixième corps, et en tête de la garde.

'Tous les corps marcheront dans le plus grand ordre et serrés.

Dans le mouvement sur Charleroi, on sera disposé à profiter de tous les passages pour écraser les corps ennemis qui voudraient attaquer l'armée ou qui manœuvreraient contre elle.

'Il n'y aura à Beaumont que le grand quartier général. Aucun autre ne devra y être établi, et la ville sera dégagée de tout embarras. Les anciens règlemens sur le quartier général et les équipages, sur l'ordre de marche, et la police des voitures et bagages, et sur les blanchisseuses et vivandières, seront remis en vigueur. Il sera fait à ce sujet un ordre général; mais, en attendant, MM. les généraux commandant les corps d'armée, prendront des dispositions en conséquence; et M. le grand prévôt fera exécuter ces règlemens. L'empereur ordonne que toutes les dispositions contenues dans le présent ordre soient tenues secrètes par MM. les généraux.

'Par ordre de l'Empereur,

'Le maréchal d'empire, major général,

'Duc de Dalmatie.'

XII.

Orders given by Lieut. General von Zieten, commanding the 1st Prussian Corps d'armée, on the 2nd May, 1815, *to be acted upon by his Brigadiers, in case of the enemy's attack.*

'Should the enemy advance by Binch or Maubeuge, and compel the advanced posts to retire, the brigades of the corps will assemble in the following manner:—

'The 1st brigade in rear of Fontaine l'Evêque,
2nd do. do. Charleroi,
3rd do. do. Fleurus,
4th do. do. Onoz,
Reserve-Cavalry, do. Gembloux, where it will receive further orders.
Reserve-Artillery, do. Egheze.

'The 2nd brigade will leave a battalion at each of the points, Châtelet, Charleroi, and Marchienne, upon which the advanced posts can fall back, and the 1st brigade will leave 2 companies at Fontaine l'Evêque for a like purpose.

'As regards the outposts, the 2 rifle-companies of the 1st brigade will retire behind the defile of the Haine. The main body of the 1st Silesian hussars will collect in rear of Lerunes, towards which point its advanced posts will retire. The post at Lobbes will retire close along the left bank of the Sambre. The main body of the 6th uhlans will retire upon Charleroi, and unite with the 2nd brigade. The post of this regiment stationed at Thuin will await the arrival of the detachment from Lobbes, with which it will then retire, by the left bank of the Sambre, to Marchienne. All the picquets between Thuin and Ham-sur-Heure will retire by Montigny de Thigneu upon Marchienne: the posts between Ham-sur-Heure and Gerpinnes will fall back upon Charleroi.

'The 1st and 2nd squadrons of the Westphalian landwehr-cavalry at Près le Fort St. Eustache, will cross the Sambre at Châtelet, and join the 2nd brigade; the 3rd and 4th squadrons will cross the Sambre at Fallizole, their outposts falling back in the same direction, and the whole rejoining the 1st and 2nd squadrons on the left bank of the river.

'The passages across the Sambre, within the sphere of each respective brigade, will continue to be occupied until the brigades receive orders to retire from their points of assembly.

'The baggage and the train will be sent to the rear as far as Temploux.

'Should the enemy's dispositions render a further retrograde movement necessary—

'The 1st brigade, after having sent on its artillery to Gosselies, will retire by Roux upon Jumet and Gosselies, and take post in rear of this town as advanced guard, and as a support to the posts on the Piéton.

'The 2nd brigade will take post in front of Fleurus.

'The 3rd and 4th brigades will take up a position in rear of Fleurus—the former on the right, the latter on the left, of the high road.

'Should the brigades receive orders to continue their retreat upon Fleurus, the 1st and 2nd will still hold the passages across the Piéton, the 2nd occupying that part of the river between Roux and its point of junction with the Sambre, and the 1st brigade that part between Roux and the Roman road. The 1st Silesian hussars and the 6th uhlans will remain as a support to the infantry posted on the Piéton. The reserve-cavalry will move upon Sombref; the reserve-artillery along the Roman road in the direction of the defile of Gembloux, in order to be at hand should an action take place in the position of Fleurus, or to strike into the high road to Namur, should a further retreat be ordered. In this latter case, the baggage of the brigades will proceed beyond Gembloux, accompanied by an officer, with the necessary escort, from each brigade.

'Should the enemy advance from Beaumont or Philippeville, the foregoing disposition remains unaltered.

'In this case, the 2nd brigade will continue to occupy the passages across the Sambre at Marchienne, Charleroi, and Châtelet, until the 1st brigade falls back upon the same line with it; the remainder of the 2nd brigade will form a support to these three posts, and then, taking up a position in rear of Gilly, upon the road from Charleroi to Fleurus, will become the advanced guard of the corps d'armée assembled at Fleurus.

'Should the enemy advance by Philippeville, and drive back the outposts of the 4th brigade, this brigade must defend the passages across the Sambre until the corps d'armée is assembled.

'Should individual French soldiers present themselves at the outposts, they must be warned to go back, unless they are deserters, but if they pay no attention to the warning, an endeavour must be made to capture them, and have them conveyed to headquarters. In no case is a vedette to be allowed to retire in a peaceable manner.

'In the event of the 1st corps d'armée concentrating at Fleurus, the head-quarters will be in that town.

'von ZIETEN.'

'Charleroi,
the 2nd of May, 1815.'

'A correct copy,
'von REICHE,
'Chief of the Staff.'

XIII.

'ORDRE DU MOUVEMENT.

'Beaumont, 14 Juin, 1815.

'Demain, le 15, à deux heures et demie du matin, la division de cavalerie légère du général Vandamme montera à cheval, et se portera sur la route de Charleroi: elle enverra des partis dans toutes les directions, pour éclairer le pays, et enlever les postes ennemis; mais chacun de ces partis sera au moins de cinquante hommes. Avant de mettre en marche la division, le général Vandamme s'assurera qu'elle est pourvue de cartouches.

'A la même heure, le lieutenant général Pajol réunira le premier corps de cavalerie, et suivra le mouvement de la division du général Domont, qui sera sous les ordres du général Pajol. Les divisions du premier corps de cavalerie ne fourniront point de détachemens; ils seront pris dans la troisième division. Le général Domont laissera sa batterie d'artillerie, pour marcher après le premier bataillon du troisième corps d'infanterie. Le lieutenant général Vandamme lui donnera des ordres en conséquence.

'Le lieutenant général Vandamme fera battre la diane à deux heures et demie du matin; à trois heures il mettra en marche son corps d'armée, et le dirigera sur Charleroi: la totalité de ses

bagages et embarras seront parqués en arrière, et ne se mettront en marche qu'après que le sixième corps et la garde impériale auront passé; ils seront sous les ordres du vaguemestre général, qui les réunira à ceux du sixième corps de la garde impériale et du grand quartier général, et leur donnera des ordres de mouvement.

'Chaque division du troisiéme corps d'armée aura avec elle sa batterie et ses ambulances; toute autre voiture qui serait dans les rangs sera brûlée.

'M. le comte de Lobau fera battre la diane à trois heures et demie, et il mettra en marche le sixième corps d'armée à quatre heures, pour suivre le mouvement du général Vandamme, et l'appuyer; il fera observer le même ordre de marche pour les troupes, l'artillerie, les ambulances, et les bagages, qui est prescrit au troisième corps.

'Les bagages du sixième corps seront réunis à ceux du troisième, sous les ordres du vaguemestre général, ainsi qu'il est dit.

'La jeune garde battra la diane à quatre heures et demie, et se mettra en marche à cinq heures; elle suivra le mouvement du sixième corps sur la route de Charleroi.

'Les chasseurs à pied de la garde battront la diane à cinq heures et se mettront en marche à cinq heures et demie, pour suivre le mouvement de la jeune gardè.

'Les grenadiers à pied de la garde battront la diane à cinq heures et demie, et partiront à six heures, pour suivre le mouvement des chasseurs à pied. Le même ordre de marche, pour l'artillerie, les ambulances, et les bagages, prescrit pour le troisième corps d'infanterie, sera observé dans la garde impériale.

'Les bagages de la garde seront réunis à ceux de troisième et sixième corps d'armée, sous les ordres du vaguemestre général, qui les fera mettre en mouvement.

'M. le maréchal Grouchy fera monter à cheval, à cinq heures et demie du matin, celui des trois autres corps de cavalerie qui sera le plus près de la route, et lui fera suivre le mouvement sur Charleroi. Les deux autres corps partiront successivement à une

heure d'intervalle l'un de l'autre; mais M. le maréchal Grouchy aura soin de faire marcher le cavalerie sur les chemins latéraux de la route principale que la colonne d'infanterie suivra, afin d'éviter l'encombrement; et aussi pour que sa cavalerie observe un meilleur ordre. Il prescrira que la totalité des bagages restent en arrière, parqués et réunis jusqu'au moment où le vaguemestre général leur donnera l'ordre d'avancer.

'M. le comte Reille fera battre la diane à deux heures et demie du matin, et il mettra en marche le deuxième corps à trois heures; il le dirigera sur Marchiennes-au-Pont, où il fera en sorte d'être rendu avant neuf heures du matin; il fera garder tous les ponts de la Sambre, afin que personne ne passe. Les postes qu'il laissera seront successivement relevés par le premier corps; mais il doit tâcher de prévenir l'ennemi à ces ponts pour qu'ils ne soient pas détruits, surtout celui de Marchiennes, par lequel il sera probablement dans le cas de déboucher, et qu'il faudrait faire aussitôt réparer, s'il avait été endommagé.

'A Thuin et à Marchiennes, ainsi que dans tous les villages sur sa route, M. le comte Reille interrogera les habitans, afin d'avoir des nouvelles des positions et forces des armées ennemies; il fera aussi prendre les lettres dans les bureaux de poste, et les dépouillera, pour faire parvenir aussitôt à l'Empereur les renseignemens qu'il aura obtenus.

'M. le comte d'Erlon mettra en marche le premier corps à trois heures du matin, et il le dirigera aussi sur Charleroi, en suivant le mouvement du deuxième corps, duquel il gagnera la gauche le plutôt possible, pour le soutenir et l'appuyer au besoin. Il tiendra une brigade de cavalerie en arrière, pour se couvrir et pour maintenir par de petits détachemens, ses communications avec Maubeuge; il enverra des partis en avant de cette place, dans les directions de *Mons* et de *Binch*, jusqu'à la frontière, pour avoir des nouvelles des ennemis, et en rendre compte aussitôt. Ces partis auront soin de ne pas se compromettre et de ne point dépasser la frontière.

'M. le comte d'Erlon fera occuper Thuin par une division; et

si le pont de cette ville était détruit, il le ferait aussitôt réparer, en même temps qu'il fera tracer et exécuter immédiatement une tête de pont sur la rive gauche. La division qui sera à Thuin gardera aussi le pont de l'abbaye d'*Alnes*, où M. le comte d'Erlon fera également construire une tête de pont, sur la rive gauche.

'Le même ordre de marche prescrit pour le troisième corps, pour l'artillerie, les ambulances et les bagages, sera observé aux deuxième et premier corps, qui feront réunir leurs bagages, et marcher à la gauche du premier corps, sous les ordres du vaguemestre le plus ancien.

'Le quatrième corps (armée de la Moselle) a reçu ordre de prendre aujourd'hui position en avant de Philippeville: si son mouvement est opéré, et si les divisions qui composent ce corps d'armée sont réunies, M. le lieutenant général Gérard les mettra en marche demain, à trois heures du matin, et les dirigera sur Charleroi; * il aura soin de se tenir à hauteur du troisième corps, avec lequel il communiquera, afin d'arriver à peu près en même temps devant Charleroi. Mais le général Gérard fera éclairer sa droite et tous les débouchés qui vont sur Namur; il marchera serré en ordre de bataille, fera laisser à Philippeville tous ses bagages et embarras, afin que son corps d'armée, se trouvant plus léger, soit plus à même de manœuvrer.

'Le général Gérard donnera ordre à la quatorizième division de cavalerie, qui a dû arriver aujourd'hui à Philippeville, de suivre le mouvement de son corps d'armée sur Charleroi, où cette division joindra le quatrième corps de cavalerie.

'Les lieutenans généraux Reille, Vandamme, Gérard, et Pajol, se mettront en communication par de fréquens partis, et ils régleront leur marche de manière à arriver en masse et ensemble devant Charleroi: ils mettront, autant que possible, à l'avant-garde, les officiers qui parlent flamand, pour interroger les habitans et

* Le général Gérard reçut plus tard un nouvel ordre qui lui prescrivit de passer, avec son corps, la Sambre, au Châtelet.

en prendre des renseignemens ; mais ces officiers s'annonceront comme commandans de partis, sans dire que l'armée est en arrière.

'Les lieutenans généraux Reille, Vandamme, et Gérard, feront marcher tous les sapeurs de leur corps d'armée, (ayant avec eux des moyens pour réparer les ponts,) après le premier régiment d'infanterie légère, et ils donneront ordre aux officiers du génie de faire réparer les mauvais passages, ouvrir des communications latérales, et placer des ponts sur les courans d'eau où l'infanterie devrait se mouiller pour les franchir.

'Les marins, les sapeurs de la garde, et les sapeurs de la réserve, marcheront après le premier régiment du troisième corps ; les lieutenans généraux Rogniat et Haxo seront à leur tête : ils n'amèneront avec eux que deux ou trois voitures : le surplus du parc du génie marchera à la gauche du troisième corps. Si on rencontre l'ennemi, ces troupes ne seront point engagées, mais les généraux Rogniat et Haxo les emploieront aux travaux de passages de rivière, de têtes de pont, de réparations de chemin, et d'ouvertures de communication, etc. La cavalerie de la garde suivra le mouvement sur Charleroi, et partira à huit heures.

'L'Empereur sera à l'avant-garde sur la route de Charleroi. M.M. les lieutenans généraux auront soin d'envoyer à sa majesté de fréquens rapports sur leurs mouvemens et les renseignemens qu'ils auront recueillis ; ils sont prévenus que l'intention de sa majesté est d'avoir passé la Sambre avant midi, et de porter l'armée à la rive gauche de cette rivière.

'L'équipage des ponts sera divisé en deux sections : la première section se subdivisera en trois parties, chacune de cinq pontons et cinq bateaux d'avant-garde, pour jeter trois ponts sur la Sambre ; il y aura à chacune de ces subdivisions une compagnie de pontonniers ; la première section marchera à la suite du parc du génie, après le troisième corps.

'La deuxième section restera avec le parc de réserve d'artillerie, à la colonne des bagages ; elle aura avec elle la quatrième com-

pagnie de pontonniers; les équipages de l'Empereur, et les bagages du grand quartier général seront réunis, et se mettront en marche à dix heures. Aussitôt qu'ils seront passés, le vaguemestre général fera partir les équipages de la garde impériale, du troisième corps, et du sixième corps; en même temps il enverra ordre à la colonne d'équipages de la réserve de la cavalerie, de se mettre en marche, et de suivre la direction qne la cavalerie aura prise. Les ambulances de l'armée suivront le quartier général, et marcheront à la tête des bagages; mais, dans aucun cas, ces bagages, ainsi que les parcs de réserve de l'artillerie, et la deuxiéme section de l'équipage de ponts, ne s'approcheront à plus de trois lieues de l'armée, à moins d'ordre du major général, et ils ne passeront la Sambre, aussi, que par ordre.

'Le vaguemestre général formera les divisions de ces bagages, et il y mettra des officiers pour les commander, afin de pouvoir en détacher ce qui sera ensuite appelé au quartier général, ou pour le service des officiers.

'L'intendant général fera réunir à cette colonne d'équipages la totalité des bagages et transports de l'administration, auxquels il sera assigné un rang dans la colonne. Les voitures qui seront en retard prendront la gauche, et ne pourront sortir du rang qui leur sera donné que par ordre du vaguemestre général.

'L'Empereur ordonne que toutes les voitures d'équipages qui seront trouvées dans les colonnes d'infanterie, de cavalerie, ou d'artillerie, soient brûlées, ainsi que les voitures de la colonne des équipages qui quitteront leur rang, et intervertiront leur marche, sans la permission expresse du vaguemestre général.

'A cet effet, il sera mis un détachement de cinquante gendarmes à la disposition du vaguemestre général, qui est responsable, ainsi que tous les officiers de la gendarmerie et les gendarmes, de l'exécution de ces dispositions, desquelles le succès de la campagne peut dépendre.

'Par ordre de l'Empereur,

'Le maréchal d'empire, major général,

'LE DUC DE DALMATIE.'

XIV.

Memorandum for the Deputy Quarter Master General of the Anglo-allied Army, on the 15th of June, 1815.

'MOVEMENTS OF THE ARMY.

'Bruxelles, 15th of June, 1815.

'General Dörnberg's brigade of cavalry, and the Cumberland hussars, to march this night upon Vilvorde, and to bivouac on the high road, near to that town.

'The Earl of Uxbridge will be pleased to collect the cavalry this night at Ninhove, leaving the 2nd hussars looking-out between the Scheldt and the Lys.

'The 1st division of infantry to collect this night at Ath and adjacent, and to be in readiness to move at a moment's notice.

'The 3rd division to collect this night at Braine-le-Comte, and to be in readiness to move at the shortest notice.

'The 4th division to be collected this night at Grammont, with the exception of the troops beyond the Scheldt, which are to be moved to Audenarde.

'The 5th division, the 81st regiment, and the Hanoverian brigade of the 6th division, to be in readiness to march from Bruxelles at a moment's notice.

'The Duke of Brunswick's corps to collect this night on the road between Bruxelles and Vilvorde.

'The Nassau troops to collect at daylight to-morrow morning on the Louvain road, and to be in readiness to move at a moment's notice.

'The Hanoverian brigade of the 5th division to collect this night at Hal, and to be in readiness at daylight to-morrow morning to move towards Bruxelles, and to halt on the high road, between Alost and Assche, for further orders.

'The Prince of Orange is requested to collect, at Nivelles, the 2nd and 3rd divisions of the army of the Low Countries; and should that point have been attacked this day, to move the 3rd division of British infantry upon Nivelles, as soon as collected.

'This movement is not to take place until it is quite certain that the enemy's attack is upon the right of the Prussian army, and the left of the British army.

'Lord Hill will be so good as to order Prince Frederick of Orange to occupy Audenarde with 500 men, and to collect the 1st division of the army of the Low Countries, and the Indian brigade at Sotteghem, so as to be ready to march in the morning at daylight.

'The reserve artillery to be in readiness to move at daylight.

'WELLINGTON.'*

XV.

'MOVEMENT OF THE ARMY.

'*After Orders*, 10 *o'clock*, p. m.

'Bruxelles, 15th of June, 1815.

'The 3rd division of infantry to continue its movement from Braine-le-Comte upon Nivelles.

'The 1st division to move from Enghien upon Braine-le-Comte.

'The 2nd and 4th divisions of infantry to move from Ath and Grammont, also from Audenarde, and to continue their movements upon Enghien.

* "Despatches of Field Marshal the Duke of Wellington. Compiled by Colonel Gurwood, C.B."

'The cavalry to continue its movement from Ninhove upon Enghien.

'The above movements to take place with as little delay as possible.

'WELLINGTON.'*

XVI.

Despatch from Napoleon to Marshal Ney.

A. M. LE MARÉCHAL,
PRINCE DE LA MOSKOWA.

'Charleroi, le 16 Juin, 1815.

'Monsieur le Maréchal, l'Empereur vient d'ordonner à M. le comte de Valmy, commandant le 3^{e} corps de cavalerie, de le réunir et de le diriger sur Gosselies, où il sera à votre disposition.

'L'intention de Sa Majesté est que la cavalerie de la garde, qui a été portée sur la route de Bruxelles, reste en arrière et rejoigne le restant de la garde impériale; mais, pour qu'elle ne fasse pas de mouvement rétrograde, vous pourrez, après l'avoir fait remplacer sur la ligne, la laisser un peu en arrière où il lui sera envoyé des ordres dans le mouvement de la journée. M. le lieutenant général Lefebvre Desnouettes enverra, à cet effet, un officier pour prendre des ordres.

'Veuillez m'instruire si le 1er corps a opéré son mouvement, et quelle est, ce matin, la position exacte des 1er et 2^{e} corps d'armée, et des deux divisions de cavalerie qui y sont attachées, en me faisant connaître ce qu'il y a d'ennemis devant vous, et ce qu'on a appris.

'Le major général,

'DUC DE DALMATIE.'

* "Despatches of Field Marshal the Duke of Wellington. Compiled by Colonel Gurwood, C.B."

XVII.

Order of Movement for Marshal Ney.

A. M. LE MARECHAL,
PRINCE DE LA MOSKOWA.

'Charleroi, le 16 juin, 1815.

'Monsieur le Maréchal, l'empereur ordonne que vous mettiez en marche les 2^e^ et 1^er^ corps d'armée, ainsi que le 3^e^ corps de cavalerie, qui a été mis à votre disposition, pour les diriger sur l'intersection des chemins dits les Trois-Bras (route de Bruxelles,) où vous leur ferez prendre position, et vous porterez en même temps des reconnaisances, aussi avant que possible, sur la route de Bruxelles et sur Nivelles, d'où probablement l'ennemi s'est retiré.

'S. M. désire que, s'il n'y a pas d'inconvénient, vous établissiez une division avec de la cavalerie à Genappe, et elle ordonne que vous portiez une autre division du côté de Marbais, pour couvrir l'espace entre Sombref et les Trois-Bras. Vous placerez, près de ces divisions, la division de cavalerie de la garde impériale, commandée par le général Lefebvre Desnouettes, ainsi que le 1^er^ régiment de hussards, qui a été détaché hier vers Gosselies.

'Le corps qui sera à Marbais aura aussi pour objet d'appuyer les mouvements de M. le maréchal Grouchy sur Sombref et de vous soutenir à la position des Trois-Bras, si cela devenait nécessaire. Vous recommanderez au général, qui sera à Marbais, de bien s'éclairer sur toutes les directions, particulièrement sur celles de Gembloux et de Wavre.

'Si cependant la division du général Lefebvre Desnouettes etait trop engagée sur la route de Bruxelles, vou la laisseriez et vous la remplaceriez au corps qui sera à Marbais par le 3^e^ corps de cavalerie aux ordres de M. le comte de Valmy, et par le 1^er^ régiment de hussards.

'J'ai l'honneur de vous prévenir que l'Empereur va se porter sur Sombref, où, d'après les ordres de Sa Majesté, M. le maréchal Grouchy doit se diriger avec le 3ᵉ et 4ᵉ corps d'infanterie, et les 1ᵉʳ, 2ᵉ et 4ᵉ corps de cavalerie. M. le maréchal Grouchy fera occuper Gembloux.

'Je vous prie de me mettre de suite à même de rendre compte à l'Empereur de vos dispositions pour exécuter l'ordre que je vous envoie, ainsi que de tout ce que vous aurez appris sur l'ennemi.

'Sa Majesté me charge de vous recommander de prescrire aux généraux commandant les corps d'armée de fair réunir leur monde et rentrer les hommes isolés, de maintenir l'ordre le plus parfait dans la troupe, et de rallier toutes les voitures d'artillerie et les ambulances qu'ils auraient pu laisser en arrière.

'Le maréchal d'empire, major général

'Duc de Dalmatie.'

XVIII.

Order of Movement for Count Reille.

A. M LE COMTE REILLE,
Commandant le 2ᵉ corps d'armée.

'Frasnes, le 16 juin, 1815.

'ORDRE DE MOUVEMENT.

'Conformément aux instructions de l'Empereur, le 2ᵉ corps se mettra en marche de suite pour aller prendre position, la cinquième division en arrière de Genappes, sur les hauteurs qui dominent cette ville, la gauche appuyée à la grande route. Un bataillon ou deux couvriront tous les débouchés en avant sur la route de Bruxelles. Le parc de réserve et les équipages de cette division resteront avec la seconde ligne.

'La neuvième division suivra les mouvements de la cinquiéme, et viendra prendre position en seconde ligne sur les hauteurs à droite et à gauche du village de Bauterlet.

'Les sixième et septième divisions à l'embranchement des Quatre-Bras, où sera votre quartier général. Les trois premières divisions du comte d'Erlon viendront prendre position à Frasnes; la division de droite s'établira à Marbais avec la deuxième division de cavalerie légère du général Piré; la premiere couvrira votre marche, et vous éclairera sur Bruxelles et sur vos deux flancs. Mon quartier à Frasnes.

'Pour le Maréchal Prince de la Moskowa,

'Le Colonel, premier aide de camp,

'HEYMÈS.'

'Deux divisions du comte de Valmy, s'établiront à Frasnes et à Liberchies.

'Les divisions* de la garde des généraux Lefebvre Desnouettes et Colbert resteront dans leur position actuelle de Frasnes.'

XIX.

Despatch from Count Reille to Marshal Ney.

A. M. LE MARECHAL,
PRINCE DE LA MOSKOWA.

'Gosselies, le 16 juin, 1815, 10 heures et quart du matin.

'Monsieur le Maréchal,

'J'ai l'honneur d'informer Votre Excellence du rapport que me fait faire verbalement le général Girard par un de ses officiers.

* This is evidently a mistake—it should be "régiments."

'L'ennemi continue à occuper Fleurus par de la cavalerie légère qui a des vedettes en avant; l'on aperçoit deux masses ennemies venant par la route de Namur et dont la tête est à la hauteur de Saint-Amand; elles se sont formées peu a peu, et out gagné quelque terrain à mesure qu'il leur arrivait du monde: on n'a pu guères juger de leur force à cause de l'éloignement; cependant ce général pense que chacun pouvait être de six bataillons en colonne par bataillon. On apercevait des mouvements de troupes derrière.

'M. le lieutenant-général Flahaut m'a fait part des ordres qu'il portait à Votre Excellence; j'en ai prévenu M. le comte d'Erlon, afin qu'il puisse suivre mon mouvement. J'aurais commencé le mien sur Frasnes aussitôt que les divisions auraient été sous les armes; mais d'après le rapport du général Girard, je tiendrai les troupes prêtes à marcher en attendant les ordres de Votre Excellence, et comme ils pourront me parvenir très vite, il n'y aura que très peu de temps de perdu.

'J'ai envoyé à l'Empereur l'officier qui m'a fait le rapport du général Girard.

'Je renouvelle à Votre Excellence les assurances de mon respectueux dévouement.

'Le général en chef du 2e corps,

'Comte Reille.'

XX.

Orders from Napoleon to Marshal Ney.

A. M. LE MARECHAL,
PRINCE DE LA MOSKOWA.

'Charleroi, le 16 juin, 1815.

'Monsieur le Maréchal,

'Un officier de lanciers vient de dire à l'Empereur que l'ennemi présentait des masses du côté des Quatre-Bras. Réunissez les

corps des comtes Reille et d'Erlon et celui du comte de Valmy, qui se met à l'instant en route pour vous rejoindre; avec ces forces, vous devrez battre et détruire tous les corps ennemis qui peuvent se présenter. Blücher était hier à Namur, et il n'est pas vraisemblable qu'il ait porté des troupes vers les Quatre-Bras; ainsi, vous n'avez affaire qu'à ce qui vient de Bruxelles.

'Le maréchal Grouchy va faire le mouvement sur Sombref, que je vous ai annoncé et l'Empereur va se rendre à Fleurus; c'est là où vous adresserez vos nouveaux rapports à Sa Majesté.

'Le maréchal d'empire, major général,

'Duc de Dalmatie.'

XXI.

Orders from Napoleon to Marshal Ney.

A. M. LE MARECHAL,

PRINCE DE LA MOSKOWA.

'En avant de Fleurus, le 16 juin, à 2 heures.

'Monsieur le Maréchal, l'Empereur me charge de vous prévenir que l'ennemi a réuni un corps de troupes entre Sombref et Bry, et qu'à deux heures et demie M. le maréchal Grouchy, avec les troisième et quatrième corps, l'attaquera; l'intention de Sa Majesté est que vous attaquiez aussi ce qui est devant vous, et qu'après l'avoir vigoureusement poussé, vous rabattiez sur nous pour concourir à envelopper le corps dont je viens de vous parler.

'Si ce corps était enfoncé auparavant, alors Sa Majesté ferait manœuvrer dans votre direction pour hâter également vos opérations.

'Instruisez de suite l'Empereur de vos dispositions et de ce qui se passe sur votre front.

'Le maréchal d'empire, major général,

'Duc de Dalmatie.'

XXII.

Orders from Napoleon to Marshal Ney.

A. M. LE MARECHAL,
PRINCE DE LA MOSKOWA.

'Monsieur le Maréchal, je vous ai écrit, il y a une heure, que l'Empereur ferait attaquer l'ennemi à deux heures et demie dans la position qu'il a prise entre le village de Saint-Amand et de Bry; en ce moment l'engagement est très prononcé; Sa Majesté me charge de vous dire que vous devez manœuvrer sur-le-champ de manière à envelopper la droite de l'ennemi et tomber à bras raccourcis sur ses derrières; cette armée est perdue si vous agissez vigoureusement; le sort de la France est entre vos mains. Ainsi n'hésitez pas un instant pour faire le mouvement que l'Empereur vous ordonne, et dirigez vous sur les hauteurs de Bry et de Saint-Amand, pour concourir à une victoire peutêtre décisive. L'ennemi est pris en flagrant délit au moment où il cherche à se réunir aux Anglais.

'Le major général

'DUC DE DALMATIE.'

'En avant de Fleurus, le 16 juin, 1815, à 3 heures un quart.*

* Une autre expéditon de cet ordre, *duplicata* porte 3 heures et demie.

XXIII.

Return of Killed, Wounded, and Missing, of the British Troops, at the Battle of Quatre-Bras.

Brigades.	Regiments.	Killed. Officers.	Killed. Sergeants.	Killed. Drummers.	Killed. Rank and File.	Killed. Horses.	Wounded. Officers.	Wounded. Sergeants.	Wounded. Drummers.	Wounded. Rank and File.	Wounded. Horses.	Missing. Officers.	Missing. Sergeants.	Missing. Drummers.	Missing. Rank and File.	Missing. Horses.	Total Rank and File Killed, Wounded, and Missing.
	Royal Artillery	..	..	..	9	19	2	..	..	17	14	..	..	..	..	1	26
1st	1st Guards, 2nd Battn.	2	1	..	22	..	4	6	..	250	..	..	..	..	..	..	514
	1st Guards, 3rd Battn.	1	2	1	17	..	6	9	1	225	..	..	..	..	..	..	
2nd	2nd Guards, 2nd Battn.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	7
	3rd Guards, 2nd Battn.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	7	..	..	..	..	..	..	
5th	30th Regiment, 2nd do.	..	1	..	4	..	2	2	..	26	..	..	..	..	5	..	304
	33rd do.	3	1	..	15	..	7	3	..	64	..	..	1	..	8	..	
	69th do. do. do.	1	4	..	33	..	4	6	1	103	..	..	..	..	..	..	
	73rd do. do. do.	..	..	1	3	..	4	1	..	43	..	..	..	..	..	..	
8th	28th do. 1st do.	..	..	..	11	..	4	4	..	56	..	..	..	..	..	..	566
	32nd do. do. do.	1	..	..	21	..	21	4	1	148	..	..	..	..	..	..	
	79th do. do. do.	1	..	..	28	..	16	10	..	248	..	1	..	..	..	..	
	95th do. do. do.	1	2	..	6	..	4	3	..	48	..	..	..	..	..	..	
9th	1st do. 3rd do.	6	2	..	18	..	12	13	..	167	..	..	..	..	..	..	788
	42nd do. 1st do.	3	2	..	40	..	15	14	1	213	..	..	..	..	..	..	
	44th do. 2nd do.	2	..	1	9	..	15	12	..	82	..	..	1	2	14	..	
	92nd do. 1st do.	4	2	..	33	..	21	13	1	212	..	..	..	..	..	..	
	General Staff	2	..	..	..	..	5	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
	Total ..	27	17	3	269	19	142	100	5	1909	14	1	2	2	27	1	2,275

XXIV.

Return of Killed, Wounded, and Missing, of the Brunswick Troops, at the Battle of Quatre-Bras.

Regiments.	Killed. Officers.	Killed. Non-commissioned Officers, and Privates.	Wounded. Officers.	Wounded. Non-commissioned Officers, and Privates.	Horses. Killed, and Wounded.	Missing. Rank and File.	Total Rank and File, Killed, Wounded, and Missing.
Regiment of Hussars ..	2	15	2	27	68		42
Squadron of Uhlans ..	..	4	..	10	8		14
Horse Battery .. .	..	..	..	..	2		..
Foot Battery	..	..	..	..	..		..
Advanced-Guard Battalion	..	9	4	43	..		52
Guard Battalion	..	15	5	106	..		121
1st Light Battalion ..	..	..	..	3	..	210*	3
2nd do.	..	18	3	49	..		67
3rd do.	..	..	..	..	..		..
1st Line Battalion ..	1	16	2	86	..		102
2nd do.	2	23	4	162	..		185
3rd do.	..	4	1	19	..		23
General Staff	1	..	..	..	..		210*
Total ..	6	104	21	505	78	210*	819

XXV.

Effective Strength of the French Army at the Battle of Ligny.

	Infantry.	Cavalry.	Artillery.	Guns.
Imperial Guard*	12,000	2,000	2,100	84
3rd Corps d'armée	13,200	1,400	1,292	38
4th do. do.	12,100	1,400	1,292	38
6th do. do.	9,900	..	1,292	38
7th Infantry-Division (Girard)	3,685	..	342	8
1st Cavalry-Corps	..	2,500	300	12
2nd do. do.	..	2,500	300	12
4th do. do.	..	3,300	300	12
	50,885	13,100	7,218	242

Grand Total 71,203 Men, and 242 Guns.

XXVI.

Effective Strength of the Prussian Army at the Battle of Ligny.

	Infantry.	Cavalry.	Artillery.	Guns.
1st Corps d'armée	27,887	1,925	1,019	96
2nd do. do.	† 25,137	4,220	1,454	80
3rd do. do.	‡ 20,006	2,005	964	48
	73,030	8,150	3,437	224

Total 84,617.

Deduct loss of 1st Corps on 15th of June 1,200.

Grand Total 83,417 Men and 224 Guns.

* Deducting the light cavalry of the guard, which was with Marshal Ney, in reserve.

† Deducting the 3rd batt. 21st regt. and 2 squadrons of the Neumark Dragoons, which had not rejoined from the vicinity of Philippeville.

‡ Deducting the 2nd batt. 3rd Kurmark landwehr, and 2 squadrons of the 6th Kurmark landwehr-cavalry, which had not rejoined from the vicinity of Dinant.

XXVII.

Orders from Napoleon to Marshal Ney.

A. M. LE MARECHAL,
PRINCE DE LA MOSKOWA.

'Fleurus, le 17 juin, 1815.

'Monsieur le Maréchal, le général Flahaut, qui arrive à l'instant, fait connaître que vous êtes dans l'incertitude sur les résultats de la journée d'hier. Je crois cependant vous avoir prévenu de la victoire que l'Empereur a remportée. L'armée prussienne a été mise en déroute, le général Pajol est à sa poursuite sur les routes de Namur et de Liége. Nous avons déjà plusieurs milliers de prisonniers et 30 pièces de canon. Nos troupes se sont bien conduites : une charge de six bataillons de la garde, des escadrons de service et la division de cavalerie du général Delort a percé la ligne ennemie, porté le plus grand désordre dans ses rangs et enlevé la position.

'L'Empereur se rend au moulin de Bry où passe la grande route qui conduit de Namur aux Quatre-Bras ; il n'est donc pas possible que l'armée anglaise puisse agir devant vous ; si cela était, l'Empereur marcherait directement sur elle par la route des Quatre-Bras, tandis que vous l'attaqueriez de front avec vos divisions qui, à présent, doivent être réunies, et cette armée serait dans un instant détruite. Ainsi, instruisez Sa Majesté de la position exacte des divisions, et de tout ce qui se passe devant vous.

'L'Empereur a vu avec peine que vous n'ayez pas réuni hier les divisions : elles ont agi isolément ; ainsi, vous avez éprouvé des pertes.

'Si les corps des comtes d'Erlon et Reille avaient été ensemble, il ne réchappait pas un Anglais du corps qui venait vous attaquer.

Si le comte d'Erlon avait exécuté le mouvement sur St. Amand que l'Empereur a ordonné, l'armée prussienne était totalement détruite, et nous aurions fait peut-être 30,000 prisonniers.

'Les corps des généraux Gérard, Vandamme, et la garde impériale ont toujours été réunis; l'on s'expose à des revers lorsque des détachements sont compromis.

'L'Empereur espère et désire que vos sept divisions d'infanterie et la cavalerie soient bien réunies et formées, et qu'ensemble elles n'occupent pas une lieue de terrain, pour les avoir bien dans votre main et les employer au besoin.

'L'intention de Sa Majesté est que vous preniez position aux Quatre-Bras, ainsi que l'ordre vous en a été donné; mais si, par impossible, cela ne peut avoir lieu, rendez-en compte sur-le-champ avec détail, et l'Empereur s'y portera ainsi que je vous l'ai dit;— si, au contraire, il n'y a qu'une arrière-garde, attaquez--la, et prenez position.

'La journée d'aujourd'hui est nécessaire pour terminer cette opération, et pour compléter les munitions, rallier les militaires isolés et faire rentrer les détachements. Donnez des ordres en conséquence, et assurez-vous que tous les blessés sont pansés et transportés sur les derrières: l'on s'est plaint que les ambulances n'avaient pas fait leur devoir.

'Le fameux partisan Lutzow, qui a été pris, disait que l'armée prussienne était perdue, et que Blücher avait exposé une seconde fois la monarchie prussienne.

'Le maréchal d'empire, major général,

'Duc de Dalmatie.'

XXVIII.

Orders from Napoleon to Marshal Ney.

A. M. LE MARECHAL,

PRINCE DE LA MOSKOWA.

'4e corps d'armée, à Gosselies.

'En avant de Ligny, le 17 à midi.

'Monsieur le Maréchal, l'Empereur vient de faire prendre position, en avant de Marbais, à un corps d'infanterie et à la garde impériale; S.M. me charge de vous dire que son intention est que vous attaquiez les ennemis aux Quatre-Bras, pour les chasser de leur position, et que le corps qui est à Marbais secondera vos opérations; S.M. va se rendre à Marbais, et elle attend vos rapports avec impatience.

'Le maréchal d'empire, major général,

'DUC DE DALMATIE.'

XXIX.

Return of Killed, Wounded, and Missing, of the British Troops, and King's German Legion, on the Retreat from Quatre-Bras to Waterloo.

	Regiments.	Killed.					Wounded.					Missing.					Total Rank and File, Killed, Wounded, and Missing.
		Officers.	Serjeants.	Drummers, or Trumpeters.	Rank and File.	Horses.	Officers.	Serjeants.	Drummers, or Trumpeters.	Rank and File.	Horses.	Officers.	Serjeants.	Drummers, or Trumpeters.	Rank and File.	Horses.	
Infantry.	30th Regt. 2nd Battn.	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	8	..	11
	33rd do.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3	..	..	1	..	..	..	3
	69th do. 2nd Battn.	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
	73rd do. do.	1	..	..	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
Cavalry.	1st Life Guards	..	..	..	8	9	1	2	..	7	..	..	..	..	..	..	15
	Royal Horse Guards	..	..	..	3	8	..	..	..	5	..	..	..	..	..	..	8
	1st or Royal Dragoons	..	..	..	1	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
	7th Hussars	1	..	..	6	17	1	5	..	16	20	2	..	1	14	22	36
	11th Light Dragoons	..	..	..	..	4	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	2
	13th Light Dragoons	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	1
	18th Hussars	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
	23rd Light Dragoons	..	1	..	..	5	..	..	..	3	..	..	..	..	2	8	5
	2nd Light Dragoons, K. G. L.	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	1	..	4
	1st Hussars, K. G. L.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	2	3	2
	General Staff	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..
	Total	2	1	..	24	45	3	8	..	41	20	3	2	1	30	33	95

XXX.

Effective Strength of the Anglo-allied Army at the Battle of Waterloo.

Infantry.

Divisions.	Brigades.	British.	K. G. Legion.	Hanoverians.	Brunswickers.	Nassauers.	Dutch-Belgians.
1st	1st British ..	1,997					
	2nd do. ..	2,064					
	3rd do. ..	2,621					
2nd	1st K. G. Legion ..	..	1,758				
	3rd Hanoverian ..	..	..	2,454			
	5th British ..	2,254					
3rd	2nd K. G. Legion ..	..	1,527				
	1st Hanoverian ..	..	..	3,189			
4th	4th British ..	1,767					
	8th do. ..	2,471					
5th	9th do. ..	2,173					
	5th Hanoverian ..	..	..	2,514			
6th	10th British ..	2,128					
	4th Hanoverian ..	..	..	2,582			
Brunswick ..	Light Infantry ..	..	..	..	3,360		
	Line	..	..	..	2,016		
Nassau	1st Regiment ..	..	..	..	..	2,880	
2nd Dutch-Belgian	1st Brigade ..	..	..	..	..	..	3,233
	2nd do. ..	..	..	..	..	..	4,300
3rd Dutch Belgian	1st do. ..	..	..	..	..	..	3,088
	2nd do. ..	..	..	..	..	..	3,581
Detachments of the King's German Legion		..	16				
		17,475	3,301	10,739	5,376	2,880	14,202
Deduct losses on the 16th and 17th of June		2,294	..	481	790	..	about 800
Total		15,181	3,301	10,258	4,586	2,880	13,402

Grand Total, 49,608 Infantry.

Cavalry.

Brigades.	British.	K. G. Legion.	Hanoverians.	Brunswickers.	Dutch-Belgians.
1st	1,226				
2nd	1,181				
3rd	387	881			
4th	1,171				
5th	772	6*			
6th	786	493			
7th	390	622			
1st Hanoverian	..	..	497		
Brunswick	..	..	..	922	
1st Dutch-Belgian	..	..	..	..	1,237
2nd do.	..	..	..	..	1,086
3rd do.	..	..	..	..	1,082
	5,913	2,002	497	922	3,405
Deduct losses on the 16th and 17th of June	70	5	..	56	about 20
Total	5,843	1,997	497	866	

Grand Total, 12,408 Cavalry.

* These 6 men of the 2nd Hussars, K. G. Legion, were employed as orderlies to different General Officers: the regiment itself was still on the frontier near Ypres.

ARTILLERY.

	British.		K. G. Legion.		Hanoverians.		Brunswickers.		Dutch-Belgians.	
	Men.	Guns.	Men.	Guns.	Men.	Guns.	Men.	Guns.	Men.	Guns.
Foot-Artillery ..	1,781	30	526	6	465	12	510	8	510	16
Horse-Artillery ..	1,212	48		12	..	..		8	667	16
Deduct losses on 16th and 17th of June	2,993	78	526	18	465	12	510	16	1,177	32
	26	..	..*	..	..*	..	..	..	..	..
Total ..	2,967	78	526	18	465	12	510	16	1,177	32

Grand Total, 5,645 Artillery, and 156 Guns.

TOTAL STRENGTH.

Infantry	49,608
Cavalry	12,408
Artillery	5,645

Grand Total, 67,661 Men, and 156 Guns.

XXXI.

Effective Strength of the French Army at the Battle of Waterloo.

	Infantry.	Cavalry.	Artillery.	
			Men.	Guns.
Imperial Guard	12,000	4,000	2,400	96
1st Corps d'armée	17,600	1,400	1,564	46
2nd do.	15,750	1,865	1,861	38
6th do.	6,600	..	1,007	30
3rd Cavalry Corps	..	3,300	300	12
4th do. do.	..	3,300	300	12
3rd Cavalry Division ..	..	1,400	150	6
5th do. do. ..	..	1,250	150	6
	51,950	16,515	7,732	246
Deduct previous losses ..	†3,000	†750	†500	
Total	48,950	15,765	7,232	246

Grand Total, 71,947 Men, and 246 Guns.

* Returns of the casualties that occurred in the King's German Legion, in the Hanoverian subsidiary corps, and among the Dutch-Belgian troops, during the 16th, 17th, and 18th, will be found in the Appendix of volume ii.

† According to the "Mémoires de Napoléon," livre ix.

END OF VOL. I.

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